11 March 1977 25p USA & Canada $1 By Air

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That Discord Again

Enough of the shabby story of Concorde has now been told, as a result of disclosures wrested from a secretive and guilty officialdom, to make it astonishing that the Government should try to don the mask of virtue while persisting in the defence of the flying monster. The project was foisted on successive cabinets by the hushing up of awkward facts, by false cost estimates and false hopes, and by meretricious appeals to national pride, assisted by French arm-twisting. At this late stage the citizens of New York are under no obligation whatever to help in redeeming the blunder.

That Concorde makes an intolerable noise on landing and take-off is not a malicious accusation, but the truth. The conservation, and where possible the improvement, of the environment is a cause that has steadily gained ground in public concern all over the world, so that it now swings votes and influences the attitudes of politicians; and this is wholly to the good. Homes and schools near London Airport have suffered from aircraft noise for a generation. Quieter engines on subsonic planes have afforded some relief in recent years, setting new standards which ought to be maintained strictly and without exceptions. When Concorde began taking off from Heathrow, an attempt was made to disguise the noise levels but was foiled by independent observers. The noise of Concorde exceeds what is permitted by regulations having the force of law; in sanctioning this dispensation from legal restraints by administrative order, the Government created a most unsavoury precedent. Kennedy Airport also has noise regulations. They were not created to exclude Concorde, but Concorde does infringe them. If the responsible authorities and the state Governor propose to enforce their rules, that is their right. If President Carter belongs to the same party as the Governor and is loth to offend him, that is Concorde's bad luck.

Nobody has any real need to fly the Atlantic in three and a half hours rather than seven, and hardly anybody wants to pay for this privilege out of his pocket. Concorde is virtually useless to the ordinary traveller; the seats on the Washington route are filled by the mandarins of the Foreign Office or the Treasury and by executives of wealthy corporations, and the only difference on the New York route is that the latter would predominate, perhaps with an admixture of showbiz personalities. The rest of the population is divided between millions of people who never go to New York (and would prefer some spending on public transport at home) and thousands of people who wish to go there conveniently and cheaply. They probably wonder why the Government which is so passionate about Concorde tried to veto Mr Freddie Laker's sky-train.

Then, amid all the ballyhoo about the 90-per-cent capacity achieved on the Washington service, it should be remembered that Concorde with 100 per cent of seats sold still cannot break even. The fantastic fuel consumption takes care of that. We are losing money with every week that we cling to the mistaken venture, and of course have no hope of ever recovering the millions spent on development – unless 100 Concordes were bought by foreign airlines, but that dream faded long ago.

So much for the general case against Concorde, with some regrets that it should have to be restated in 1977. The height of absurdity is reached when Britain 'warns' the US and threatens reprisals. Probably we are once again being tugged along by the French; for internal political reasons, President Giscard is playing at being De Gaulle. Whether this alignment will do us any real good in the EEC is a question that Dr Owen should be considering. What, however, are we going to do to our rebellious ex-colony in North America? During his Concorde flight, Mr Callaghan must have scratched his head about that. Perhaps we should threaten not to borrow any more money from the US. Perhaps we should warn Mr Carter against reflating the American economy, on which all our hopes depend and for which we have been pleading. Perhaps we should refuse to let Americans buy Scotch whisky. The whole affair smells of the vainglorious, petulant jingoism that Britain can no longer afford. It must have something to do with Jubilee Year.

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Spotlight on Politics

James Fenton

What Must We Do?

Good morning. What must we do? Are we the sick man of the industrialised world? Is Britain's countryside one of the most beautiful in the world? Can proud nations live on a diet of uninterrupted failure? Are the British people tough enough to be told the truth? Is our main failing a profound resistance to change? Would our ideal society be one in which each individual could develop his or her potential to the full? Do we, as democratic socialists, have to face facts as they are? Is poverty still with us? Is there a need for courageous and determined political leadership at every level of society? These are some of the questions we shall be looking at later in the column. But first, for the news in detail, over to the second paragraph.

Well, here we are in the second paragraph and to be quite blunt there ain't an awful lot of news going on at the moment. However, as good luck would have it, the Manifesto Group chose this week to publish their first major policy document, *What We Must Do*. Available at 50p (including postage and packing) from The Secretary, Manifesto Group, House of Commons, 36 pages long, and for those of you who are reading this column in black and white – here it is, with I must say a very handsome glossy red cover. With me in the Spotlight studio to discuss the document this week are some of the authors who spent the last year compiling it – Bryan Magee, Giles Radice and Ian Wrigglesworth. Bryan Magee, let me ask you first of all, is this *all* you've been doing for the last year? I mean, to be perfectly frank, isn't the document a load of utter tosh? Isn't it a pretty weary collection of vapid slogans and empty generalisations, slung together by someone with an IQ of a grape and the political acumen of a baked potato? What do you say to that?

MAGEE: I don't think you're being quite fair. If you read the pamphlet carefully you'll see that's not what we're saying. What we're saying, if I may quote the document, is that 'we believe that the British people are tough enough to be told the truth, and that they would support a programme of radical and constructive change if such a programme were presented to them.' That's what we're trying to do.

FENTON: I'm terribly sorry. Yes, I think I have been rather unfair. What you're saying, then, is that we need a bit of a change.

MAGEE: Yes that's exactly it! What we're saying, what we say in the conclusion, is that 'the changes required are so sweeping that a comprehensive strategy of change is called for'.

FENTON: I'm afraid you've just lost me there. Can we take it slightly more slowly. Are you saying that, because we need a change, we ought to have a change?

MAGEE: Well (*laughs*) I'm afraid it's a little more subtle than *that*. What we're *saying* is that, because we need to change a lot of things in our society, we ought to *decide* to change a lot of things in our society. That's what you're saying, in effect.

RADICE: Perhaps I might intervene here –

FENTON: Giles Radice.

RADICE: – and add to what Bryan has been saying. What the pamphlet points out is that things have to *change* but – no, just let me go on a moment because I think this is important – the trouble is that there is a *resistance to change*. People don't want to change, and that's what's wrong. I think this is one of the important points in the document, and it's summed up in a phrase which we have used in order to sum it up, and that phrase is 'resistance to change'.

FENTON: Ian Wrigglesworth, you're sitting there with a very odd expression on your face. You aren't by any chance taking part in a ferret-down-the-trousers marathon, are you?

WRIGGLES: I beg your pardon?

FENTON: It's something I've always noticed about you, how uncomfortable you look. For instance, when you walk, your shoulders are always six inches ahead of your feet, and you always keep your arms stiff and your hands well from your sides, as if you were just about to reach for your pistols. You look like a gun-slinger who has been taken short. Do you agree there's a resistance to change in society?

WRIGGLES: Yes I do, although I'd like to point out, as we say in the introduction, that 'not all members of the Manifesto Group agree with every view expressed in this pamphlet'. I mean, there are some pretty controversial passages where *some might think* that we've gone a little overboard.

FENTON: What sort of passages?

WRIGGLES: Well for instance we say that 'our ideal society would be one in which each individual could develop his or her potential to the full – maximising both his or her personal happiness and also the contribution he or she makes to society as a whole.' Now, quite a few members of the Manifesto Group might think we were bending over backwards too far in including women in our ideal society, but we felt that we had to be scrupulously fair, spell it out, make it absolutely clear that we were prepared to treat the sexes equally. That's why we put two his-or-hers and one he-or-she in the same sentence.

FENTON: What other controversial passages are there?

WRIGGLES: Well, that last one continues: 'We want a community of well-housed and well-educated men and women' – note the women again, you see, absolutely fair – 'men and women, each with a full chance in life; all usefully employed when in health; properly cared for in sickness, misfortune or old age; and running their affairs together in a democratic way.' I don't think it's giving away any secrets to say that we had some difficulty in getting that passage through the sub-committee. Some of the members were against good housing, others thought that good education should not be spread too far in society, and there were quite a few who were totally opposed to anyone having a full chance in life. But where we really ran into trouble was over proper care in old age. Perhaps Bryan you would like to say something about that?

MAGEE: Well yes indeed –

FENTON: Bryan Magee.

MAGEE: – there was a sizeable revolt over this one, and I don't mind saying that I wondered for a moment whether the Manifesto Group might not split from top to toe on just this issue. A lot of people felt very deeply and strongly – and I admire them for the courage with which they argued their case – that old people were such an infernal drag on society that they should simply be left to fend for themselves. Some of our members even suggested that everyone over 70 should be given a concrete overcoat and dropped into the Thames at Limehouse Reach. Others came down in favour of torture and mutilation for OAPs, and there was quite a groundswell of opinion in favour of the firing-squad for all grandparents.

FENTON: I should imagine the sparks really flew when it came to that bit about 'a need for courageous and determined political leadership at every level of society'. I suppose there was quite a heated debate about that one.

MAGEE: Well I must say you've put your finger on a very sore spot. As you know, there is a strong feeling in the Manifesto Group that all the best leaders we've had have been flabby-faced cowards, totally infirm of purpose and without any backbone. So this idea of courageous and determined political leadership – and our idea that 'it is the task of a democratic Labour movement to provide this leadership' – these ideas are very new and, for some of our members, difficult to swallow.

FENTON: No doubt that is why your document came under such a strict embargo. Bryan Magee, Giles Radice, Ian Wrigglesworth, thank you all very much. We shall be back in the same spot next week with further news and views from Westminster. Till then, from all of us here in the Spotlight studio, good night, good luck and God bless.

NEW STATESMAN
Vol 93 No 2399
Published weekly at Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ Tel: 01-405 8471
© 1977
The Statesman & Nation Publishing Co Ltd

Annual Subscription Rates

By surface mail	UK £12.50 Overseas £14 USA $30
By air mail	Europe £17.50 Middle East £19 Africa, India £20 USA, Canada $40 Australia, NZ, Far East £21

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Patrick Wintour

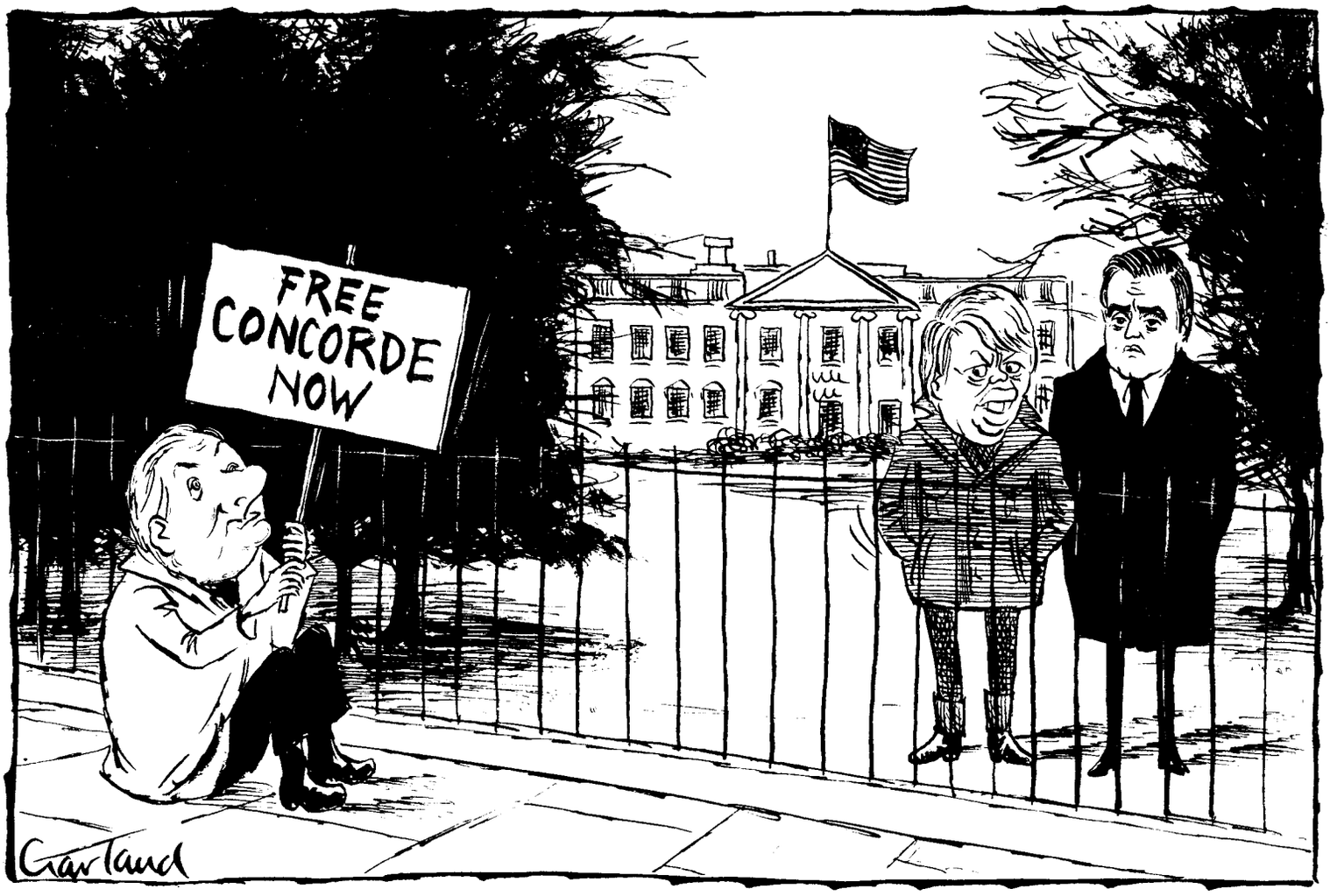
One Jones, One Vote

The Beaver is preparing to head upstream. The 1.9 million members of the Transport and General Workers Union have been voting since 21 February to decide their new General Secretary and successor to Jack Jones. The winner will hold office 'during the pleasure of the union' i.e. until retirement. It is only the sixth such election in the union's 50-year history. But already the one-month ballot is regarded as unlike any other in the past. Traditionally the retiring General Secretary indicates his unspoken but recognisable blessing to a particular successor by grooming him for the job. Jack Jones, for example, was appointed to a specially designed post of assistant executive secretary five years before Frank Cousins retired, a position which gave him the opportunity to become widely known in the union.

On this occasion Moss Evans, who was provided with the new post of national organiser two years ago, has had the status of official candidate and favourite son conferred upon him. If Harry Urwin, the deputy secretary, had been younger and fitter he might have been given the nod by Jones and the old style of passing down the secretaryship might have survived. But once it became clear some time back that Urwin had decided not to stand, it soon became equally clear that Evans did not have a big enough reputation to stop all the other contenders from joining him at the starting-line. Among the press Evans has developed a somewhat exaggerated name as a tough negotiator, founded on his record in his electoral base of the Midlands car-workers. Inside the union, though generally liked, he is not known for generating ideas or for any great independence from those immediately around him. The consensus is that if he is elected a political vacuum will develop at the centre of the union and even within the TUC.

Partly as a result of Evans's shortcomings and partly due to the climate for democratising the union's internal structure four other serious candidates have appeared and breathed life into the contest. One of them, John Cousins (son of) has broken the gentlemen's agreement even more, by actively campaigning among the 5,000 branches and in the media. Jones would prefer a quiet, private affair and goes quite queasy (with some justification in view of the track record) at the thought of press interference. But for an outsider in the race like Cousins it is simply throwing the game away to the *status quo* candidate if he sticks to the unwritten rule of limiting the campaign to the publication of 200,000 500-word addresses from each candidate. Cousins openly favours the introduction of a postal ballot as a way of increasing on 1968's 37-per-cent turnout and says a candidate should have the right of 'speaking when, where and to whom about whatever he wants'. John Miller of the chemicals and rubber trade group, Alec Kitson, Labour Party NEC member and Larry Smith of the busmen (the three other front-runners) as TGWU officials are for the moment compromised, but also want the lifting of the gag. The desirability of a postal ballot along the lines of the AUEW is less clear-cut. So long as enough ballot boxes are distributed to branches, workplaces and district offices and the union's two papers, the *Record* and the *Highway*, become a little less puritanical in their attitude to the election, then the present one-month ballot provides sufficient chance and enticement to vote.

A more important issue is how earnestly the new General Secretary will review the state of health of the union's day-to-day democracy. For historical reasons, general unions, hiding behind the defence of efficiency, decentralise political power less extensively than craft unions. The General and Municipal Workers Union with its block voting is probably the least defensible. In the TGWU the General Secretary, as the



'Pesky dissident!'

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only elected official, is granted a unique legitimacy and authority. In this world of popular 'bossdom' the General Secretary seeks his mandate from the amorphous mass membership. No other official can aspire to such authority. As in Philip II's Spanish empire too many decisions have to go through Jones for ratification; nearly 30 heads of department report directly to him. Just describing the rigours of Jones's 18-hour day made Larry Smith break into a gentle sweat.

Their rulebook does not exactly have a Bullock-style ring about it. Meeting biennially, the conference decides policy in the broadest terms (and for instance gave Jones a two-year warrant for the social contract). In the intervening period a 40-strong General Executive Council, meeting for one week every three months, decides policy. The GEC merges the dual structure of the union by containing 26 regional representatives and one member from each of the 11 trade groups. All the regional representatives are lay officers – elected by ballot, so providing a rank-and-file injection right into the heart of the beast. In turn the GEC elects an 11-strong inner cabinet, the financial and general purposes committee, which meets for a couple of days every month. This small group made the crucial decision to pay the fines under the Industrial Relations Act. At all other times the General Secretary is constitutionally on his own.

How much flesh there is on this democratic bone is a crucial issue in the election. Jones, unsurprisingly, denies that the conference can be stage-managed, but when time is at such a premium the practice of compositing motions or referring them back to the GEC gives at least some opportunity for manipulation. But it will be instructive to see how their incomes policy debate is conducted in July. Jones gave me an impressively detailed description of the executive committee's meetings last week which included the resolution in favour of a price-freeze as part of any Phase Three. But it is said that Jones never loses on a substantial issue at the GEC and that members are so swamped under a thick wodge of paper reports that this form of remote control can never be a sufficient check. The most persistent criticism of Jones is that he is unchallengeable by virtue of his powers of patronage. Whereas all 180 AUEW officials face periodic re-election (and the demands of playing to the gallery) the TGWU official raised from the dust of the factory floor to the court of Transport House displays blind loyalty to his benefactor. Happily the union rule-book is less medieval. Jones is not involved in the appointment of local officers – while the whole inner cabinet appoint the top officers. Elections are not the only index of democracy in a trade union. Power within unions is normally concentrated at the level where collective bargaining is conducted. Here Jones has decentralised the already devolved negotiating power to lower levels. Chiefly it is national incomes policies which undermine shopfloor democracy.

All the five front-runners favour a return to collective bargaining as the first prerequisite, but Evans seeks a more orderly return than others. Kitson mischievously wonders what an orderly return is; Evans, who would have happily not uttered a word if things had run their predicted course, has courageously come out in favour of whatever the biennial conference decides to be in favour of. Larry Smith has an excellent base as national secretary of the busmen. He bitterly criticised the authoritarianism of Arthur Deakin, General Secretary during the Fifties. Since then he has mellowed into a centrist eager to retain trade group autonomy but still critical of the patronage system from which he has not benefited. The maverick Cousins bravely claims he will win; he was cut by Jones as soon as his father had retired (an example of patronage in reverse) and had a stormy relationship with his trade group until he joined NEDO more than a year ago. His plans for the union are the most idiosyncratic and brash. Borrowing from his father who was Minister of Technology under Wilson he would not defend manning agreements but rather immediately galvanise a low wage economy by going for agreements in selected industries of high wages for high productivity. But the white hot heat of technology has no electoral base. The sadness from the traditional Left's view is that typically they have split their vote. Kitson, offered the number three post in return for bringing his Scottish Commercial motormen into the union is now, thanks to his criticisms of the social contract, little but a powerless ornament. Known as the minister without portfolio, frequently away on international delegations, he would try to swing the union back to the Left. By many accounts he promised not to run, changed his mind and so destroyed John Miller's chances, who had similar political views but better industrial qualifications.

But the greatest enigma is why Jones ever settled on Evans as his successor. The rumour that the executive were still considering appointing Urwin as late as last September as acting general secretary suggests that someone high up was not happy with the way things were developing. But now it is well past recall. The only certainty seemingly is that Jones won't be looking to find his name on any lavender coloured paper. After he retires he intends to carry on the pensioners' fight and help organise unionisation in the South East of London where he lives. And that, if nothing else, I believe.

Mary Holland

Mr Mason Plays It Rough

Last Thursday Roy Mason accused the BBC *Tonight* programme of giving a one-sided picture of methods used by the police in Northern Ireland to question people suspected of terrorist crimes. The programme in question had shown Keith Kyle interviewing two men who claimed that they had been subjected to serious ill-treatment in Castlereagh Barracks in Belfast. The presenter, John Timpson, emphasised that the police had been invited to appear, had refused, and had been given an open invitation to come on the programme whenever they felt able to discuss the two cases.

Having accused the BBC of bias, Mr Mason went on to imply that Mr Kyle and the *Tonight* team had been conned. 'It can be said,' he commented, 'that the questioning of the two men is considered to be fully justified in the light of the information available.' All this has apparently come as a bit of a shock to the *Tonight* team. Journalists of Keith Kyle's calibre and patent respect for authority are not accustomed to being called knaves and fools. But to the embattled BBC in Belfast it is simply another incident in the catalogue of smears and accusations which has characterised Mr Mason's relations with the Corporation since he took office last Autumn.

In fact, as one might have expected, the *Tonight* team had proceeded with impeccable journalistic caution. They delayed showing their programme until they could double- and treble-check their interviewees. They also had considerable difficulty in persuading the two men to appear and are horrified that Mr Mason should have seriously endangered their safety by as good as branding them in his official statement as terrorists. As to the story itself, they appear to have stumbled on it almost by accident and to have been genuinely shocked that such things are going on.

Their surprise indicates powerfully just how effective the blackout of any really uncomfortable news from Northern Ireland has become. Every journalist who writes from Belfast (at least those with any contacts beyond the army and the Northern Ireland Office) knows that for some time now there has been growing evidence of the use of interrogation methods which, if they do not exactly amount to the scientifically controlled torture techniques which Mr Silkin swore at Strasbourg we would never use again, feel very much the same to those on the receiving end. You don't need to talk to the IRA or the UVF to hear about it.

It comes out in court every day of the week. Journalists also know why it is happening, and the blame does not lie primarily with the police. It is happening because the only visible bright spot in British policy in Northern Ireland now comes when Mr Mason faces Mr Neave or whomever at Question Time in the House of Commons and proudly declares that the due process of the law is working in Northern Ireland and that last year 900 terrorists were convicted in the courts. The majority of these convictions are made on the evidence of confessions made to the police.

The reasons why this does not get reported are more complex than Mr Mason shouting at the BBC, though that is important. For a start there is the boredom at all journalistic levels with Northern Ireland. How long is it now since the *Sunday Times*

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saved the press's self-respect by exposing the torture methods later condemned at the Court of Human Rights? Almost as important is the fact that many of the people who are maltreated do belong to violent organisations. They have committed atrocious crimes. Many journalists, like many members of the public, believe that such men have no rights. If a confession has to be beaten out of them to put them away, so be it. And, by extension, if some innocent people suffer too, well that's the kind of thing that's bound to happen in war.

But there are others who know about substantial allegations of brutality, disapprove of it and still don't write about it. Or at least only very rarely. Most of our moral cowardice has to do with the fear of being smeared by association, a tactic which Mr Mason uses brilliantly. If you believe that the IRA and the Loyalist para-military organisations are a very important factor in the Northern Ireland situation, if you think that their activities and views should be examined and reported, and if as well as that you opine that not even terrorists should be treated brutally in prison and that the methods used on them should be exposed and discussed, then you all too easily gain the reputation of being in some sense a spokesman for them. And, inevitably, as someone who propagates their views.

What sets in then is a process of self-censorship which needs no *diktat* from authority to enforce it. The BBC in Belfast have resisted Mr Mason's bullying tactics with admirable spirit. The Controller of Programmes, Dick Francis, made a speech at Chatham House recently which not only rebutted Mr Mason's accusations but said that, if anything, the BBC in the past had been too cautious in its treatment of Northern Ireland.

But we all know the score. If an article or a programme or an interview is going to provoke rage from Airey Neave, cries of IRA-lover from Mr Mason and 'flak' from the press, then everyone involved, no matter how courageous, from the researcher to the Controller instinctively reacts by thinking 'Oh God, can we face it?'. And as each person in the hierarchy has this reaction separately when the problem arrives on his desk the disincentives to reporting on how and why a young man jumps out of a police-station window are formidable.

The *Tonight* team are reportedly distressed at the phone calls to the BBC calling them traitors. But this is not surprising. If Mr Mason says they are stirring it up, if almost nothing appears in the rest of the press to support their story, how can the public know who is telling the truth? If Mr Mason does succeed in bullying the BBC into a posture of docile cooperation or intimidating its staff into more rigorous self-censorship it will not help the situation in Northern Ireland.

It will simply mean that the public is denied the information it needs to make a judgment on the issue. We are told again and again that the British public doesn't care about Northern Ireland. That may be so. They still have a right to be informed even if they don't care. That is what public service broadcasting is all about.

Belfast

John Harris

Our Inglorious War Memorial

At the end of the 'war to end all wars' in 1918 the carnage had been so horrific that both victor and vanquished saw the appropriateness of erecting great memorials to the dead. Every village and town, church and cathedral in Britain subscribed to this idea; so did the regiments, and of course there were the great cemeteries laid out by the Imperial War Graves Commission. 'We shall remember them' was the theme in marble, stone, bronze and brick, and the global cost was phenomenal. What has all this to do with the National Land Fund? The connection may seem tenuous, but it is very real.

The Land Fund, established in 1946, was designed to be the nation's memorial to the dead of the second world war. It seems to have had no precedent and was never emulated. It was fathered by Hugh Dalton, Chancellor of the Exchequer in the immediate post-war government. In the debate on the Finance Bill on 9 April 1946 Dalton said:

> It is surely fitting, in this proud moment of our history, when we are celebrating victory and deliverance from overwhelming evils and horrors, that we should make through this fund a thank-offering for victory, and a war memorial which, in the judgment of many, is better than any work of art in stone or bronze. I should like to think that through this fund we shall dedicate some of the loveliest parts of this land to the memory of those who died in order that we might live in freedom . . . let this land of ours be dedicated to the memory of our dead, and to the use and enjoyment of the living for ever.

To practical ends the fund was established by the sale of war-surplus goods and £50m. was invested in short term government securities. Its mandate was clear and concise and there were no restrictions upon the spending of either interest or capital. But something went wrong and the blame may lie with the Ministry of Works, for by 1956 another £10m. had accumulated in interest, and to those who are good at arithmetic that is the clue to the fate of the fund: *it was not being used*, for by 1956 only £750,000 had been spent, and as far as the public was concerned, spent secretly. The fund in the civil-service mind at least had virtually ceased to exist.

'No, no, you mustn't think of it as strike-breaking. Try to think of yourself as a sea-dog.'

The failure to use it cannot help seeming even more astonishing, given that Dr Dalton's original plan had been specifically extended in scope to include, in 1953, the acquisition of outstanding houses with their contents and land and, in 1956, the acceptance for our museums of pre-eminent works of art. Possibly Treasury documents are full of minutes concerning a multitude of rejected pleas for help from the fund; but this is doubtful, and a truer explanation may be that the Treasury had put its own gloss on the working of the fund. Such a gloss certainly seems to shine brightly through Arthur Woodburn's strange question in *Hansard* (1 July 1957): 'Is it not the fact that in all the years during which the fund has been in existence there has been no danger?' For a Scottish Member to have asked such a question about our 'heritage' at a time when Scottish houses were falling like ninepins, when in Britain one house had been demolished every three-and-a-half days in 1955, can only be seen as a striking demonstration of the limits of parliamentary knowledge.

Indeed, Mr Woodburn's question looks all the odder in retrospect as he must have been aware that the fund was about to be pillaged. For it was in that same debate on the Finance Bill that Peter Thorneycroft, the then Chancellor of the Exchequer, introduced the objectionable proposal to reduce the Land Fund from approximately £60m. to £10m. And why? Because, in the words of Enoch Powell, Financial Secretary of the day, the fund was 'not merely inert; it is absolutely non-existent'. Powell was hinting that, as far as the Treasury was concerned, the Land Fund merely existed as a piece of departmental book-keeping.

Within the House the Chancellor's exercise in plunder was fought against bravely, most notably by Dalton himself, who reiterated his ideas of 1946: 'The plain truth is . . . that in 1945 and 1946 we were selling . . . vast quantities of war stores of all kinds. It appeared to me . . . desirable and appropriate to set aside some part of that money that by various means, the beauty of England, the famous historical houses, the wonderful still unspoiled open country, might be preserved in the future.' Alas, Dalton and his supporters had the Government and the Treasury against them. He hinted darkly at previous efforts to nullify

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the fund: 'Somewhere in the recesses of the Treasury there has for years existed a brief, proving to the satisfaction of the drafter of the document that there is no such thing as the Land Fund'; and he attacked Powell, 'philosopher now turned into a junior Minister', for taking the standpoint that 'the thing has no real existence; there is no fund.' The Committee divided: Ayes 240, Noes 198. So the fund was reduced from nearly £60m. to £10m. Once again the fund was lost from the public consciousness.

Yet the fact that its resources have risen – with interest – from £10m. in 1956 to £14.6m. on 13 March 1973 and £18,415,000 on 31 March 1976, is proof that either both the Department of the Environment (for historic properties) and the Department of Education and Science (for works of art for museums) must be deliberately underusing the fund, or that the Treasury is refusing to accede to all their demands. Three museum directors I spoke to knew of the fund but did not know why it was set up. Perhaps if they did, there would be more pressure upon the departments concerned to spend more of this money for its intended commemorative purposes that Hugh Dalton outlined 30 years ago.

Maybe public anger over Mentmore will now do the trick. For it is said that the Treasury's conditions for granting an allocation from the fund has been (and is?) that the Department of the Environment's gross vote be reduced by the same amount. So perhaps Mr Powell was right: the fund is 'absolutely non-existent'. So much for the Treasury's feeling for the 463,554 dead of the last war.

David Leitch

The Battle for Paris

Pull down the Eiffel Tower, blow up the Maine-Montparnasse one, restore horse-drawn *fiacres*, ban cars, ban TV one day a week, introduce cycle-tracks, cover the hole in the *Halles* with trees and grass, give collective transport priority over personal cars. The slogan of the new Paris-ecology candidates in this weekend's elections for the new mayor and his 108 councillors, is 'refuse the absurdity' of the way the city has been allowed to develop in the last pitiless 15 years.

This is all very intriguing and it might even turn out to be crucial. When during the presidential elections nearly three years ago an unknown figure called René Dumont offered himself to the mildly diverted electorate on a similar ecology programme 2.6 per cent of the voters, almost all of them very young, actually voted for him. Considering that the concept was then as unfamiliar as Dumont himself it wasn't a bad result.

However, French political life being what it is, or at any rate has been since the 1950s, as soon as the second presidential round came up the ecology novelty was forgotten in the customary 'polarisation' between Left and Right. Yet 'the Greens' quietly and modestly occupied themselves with useful local activities all over France. In the centre of Paris itself, where their support looks most timid, they brought off a couple of modest triumphs. One was mobilising opinion and preventing two beautiful green public *places*, the Square du Temple and the Square Jean XXIII, from being transformed into parking lots, an idea of the purest folly and absurdity. They were always around with leaflets, often rather pretty ones, and often beards and an impression of cheerful informality which was a bit reminiscent of the Dutch 'Provos' and about as untypically Parisian as you could imagine. For obvious reasons. If you live in an ecological disaster zone then your reactions to others tend to become as polluted and concrete as the environment itself.

The Parisians do not give off an impression of great happiness which is no doubt, as 'the Greens' are saying, not unconnected with such considerations as the 'normality' of two or three hours daily commuting, itself a consequence of apartments in the centre of town costing £1,000 a square metre, and the fact that, again in the very centre where the ecologists are most active, the population has diminished by as much as one-third.

When I first spent a lot of time in the Marais, the third *arrondissement* section which has become the archetype of the city's urban problems, it was a cheerful proletarian slum. Above all it was crowded, day and night. For two centuries indeed it had been the most densely inhabited part of the city. Now, ten years or so later, the depopulation has become so acute that at night or during weekends it has become almost sinisterly empty. In the neighbouring quarter of *Les Halles* the transformation, again mainly dominated by considerations to do with property speculation and the motor car, has been such that while it might be acceptable for a long weekend for a Japanese businessman patrolling the sex-shops any idea of actually living there for any length of time has become a nightmare.

Now, my own instinct is that the day of 'the Greens', in Paris and elsewhere, has not quite arrived. But there are indications it may be round the next corner. It is certainly impressive to note that in polls conducted in the last week as many as 70 per cent of those interviewed have been prepared to say they think the ecological issue is the most important single aspect of what is now happening in Paris. And, particularly striking in view of Dumont's experience in 1974, people of 51-plus, once apparently closed to such matters, are now as favourable to radical ecological ideas as the under-30's.

How much significance such polls have in the currently novel situation is of course another matter. In the first place there is not much by the way of precedent to go on. A Mayor for Paris, rather than a Prefect with overall responsibility for the region, is in itself a novelty (a bright notion of President Giscard's which one imagines he now profoundly regrets). The intervention of Jacques Chirac has immensely complicated the position of the majority which has, in Michel D'Ornano, an official Elysée-blessed candidate already.

And the fact that these two men are both obviously carpet-bagger candidates, with regional ties outside the capital, might be thought to generate some resentment among the locals. The difference between them politically is obscure in the extreme, and indeed comes down to matters of style and personality. D'Ornano is a kind of administrative cab-horse who has been much embarrassed at having to run a campaign in which, because of President Giscard's current unpopularity, he has been obliged to try and disavow his master, or at the very least dissociate himself from the Elysée links as much as possible. Chirac is no doubt the more loved (though his lovability I find extremely hard to detect or personally understand) as well as the most loathed. His meetings often end with banging of feet on the floor and chants of 'Chirac', which always sounds uneasily like *'Sieg Heil'*.

Both Chirac and D'Ornano have found themselves under the ambiguous necessity of talking a lot about ecology, and the necessity of either 'safeguarding' or 'rescuing' the Paris environment. It would not seem to me that this is very reassuring since both men have been long and intimately involved with the right-wing choices which have caused the present lamentable situation. They were both, for instance, partisans of the freeway system which, had it gone through as it very nearly did, would have effectively destroyed the Left Bank for anyone not visiting it behind the wheel. They are both money men, and natural capitalists.

Given these circumstances it is hard to see why the Left, led by Georges Sarre, a clever and in many ways impressive figure, have run so tepid a campaign. They must presumably be hoping to 'peak' between the two rounds. Sarre, actually a native of this city, which might be thought to help, does seem to have realised – an unusual insight for a politician – that everyone has been drenched in politics to a degree where there is something to be said for allowing them some civilised peace and quiet. On the other hand the Left, while evidently as well disciplined as usual, have emerged as oddly dull and without élan – even with the assistance of such big guns as François Mitterrand and Michel Rocard. The Left have also had the support of *Le Matin de Paris*, the new and still extremely patchy daily which was created specifically for these unusually interesting elections, and the parliamentary ones of this time next year when the game will be entirely for real.

By then the ecologists will also have had time to organise themselves on a less ad hoc basis. The papers have begun to talk in the last 48 hours of 'the Green Tide' which sounds inspiring but is in fact a bit premature. The fact remains, however, that they have managed to get 1,200 candidates into

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the field nationally, and will be represented in 15 major towns and another 60 or so *communes*. In most of the areas where they have been cited in opinion polls they have been promised at least 10 per cent of intentions to vote – and in one or two particularly strong points a good deal more. In Chambéry they might get 18 per cent, in the Marais and another central *arrondissement* of Paris, the first polls at the beginning of the week were indicating 19 per cent.

The magic figure for 'the Greens' is 12.5 per cent. Wherever they can poll this proportion they are still left in the race the second time round. But they can equally advise their supporters to vote for another candidate which gives them a weapon which characteristically, they seem unlikely to use. For the moment at least. Brice Dalonde – a 31-year-old veteran of Dumont's 1974 campaign – gave a good example of the new 'Green's' style when a journalist tried to find out the answer to the very important question of whether he and his fellows will be advising their comrades to vote for the Left the second time round. 'Very likely we won't give them any advice either way' was the reply. 'After all, they're grown up, don't you think?'

It seems to me that they are spectacularly more mature than anyone else around.

Paris

Peter Wilby

Neither Great Nor a Debate

Mr Gordon Oakes, Minister of State for Education, opened the third regional conference on education, held at Preston, by imploring the 200 delegates to throw away their set speeches and take part in a proper debate instead. He might as well have asked the Stretford Enders to put away their team scarves and behave like West End theatregoers. For the most striking characteristic of the Great Debate so far is that it is not a debate at all. Still less is it great.

A typical Great Debate speech (or 'contribution' as the ministers call it) goes something like this:

> I would like to speak from the chalk-face. Too many people here and in the media do not know what they are talking about. I represent the National Association of Teachers of Axe-Grinding. It is no use, in my opinion, asking for higher educational standards unless there are more resources for the teaching of axe-grinding. A recent survey by my Association showed that the average school devotes only 0.5 per cent of its timetable to axe-grinding.
>
> And at least 60 per cent of the pupils are taught by teachers who have no adequate training in the subject. Further, the members of my Association would deplore any suggestion that we should have a breathing-down-our-necks situation, with people trying to assess what we are doing. At this moment in time, we need five-year courses of initial training, in-service training every six months, an expert axe-ginder in every school with his own axe-grinding suite and a massive expansion of resources.

If the speaker attends a conference chaired by Mrs Shirley Williams, he can be sure that she will make a great show of listening, with eager, bird-like movements of the head. But nobody else will take the slightest notice. The next speaker will not agree or disagree with the axe-grinder. He will talk about something entirely different – about school meals supervision, perhaps. There is no debate, only a series of statements, no meeting of minds, only a sketchy consensus of prejudices.

The point of the conference, according to the Department of Education and Science, is to test opinion at the regional grass-roots, 'to listen to people from whom we do not normally hear'. One can only observe that the DES has a curious opinion of what constitutes a grass-root. The 42 speakers at Newcastle included nine people counted by Mrs Williams as 'classroom teachers'. Two of them were full-time teachers' union officials. Most of the others gave the kind of union view that the DES must have received through innumerable delegations and memoranda. Mr Eric Robinson, principal of Bradford College, who knows Mrs Williams well enough to appear on a party political broadcast with her, has spoken at each of the first three conferences – once as the representative of the Equal Opportunities Commission, once as the representative of the Council for National Academic Awards, once as the principal of his college.

Mr Robinson spoke sensibly enough, as did Miss Betty Lockwood when she wore the EOC hat at Newcastle and Preston. But it is hard to believe that ministers and officials need to troop round the North of England in order to hear the opinion of a statutory body. It might, on the other hand, have been worth their while visiting Bradford to hear the views of the City's 30,000 Asians. Yet the night before the conference it was discovered that there was not to be a single coloured face among the 200 delegates. Neither of the two immigrants who were persuaded to accept belated invitations (two others preferred to join the demonstrations outside) spoke during the conference.

The trouble with a government department going through the motions of consultation is that, as Dr Johnson observed of the dog standing on its hind legs, it is not done well and the wonder is that it is done at all. It does not occur to civil servants and politicians that there is any way of consulting except through institutions and pressure groups. If they stage a conference in the North, they simply invite regional representatives of the same pressure groups, saying the same thing as they hear in London And the result, when pressure groups are invited to give their opinions in public, is not a meeting of minds, but more entrenched positions than ever. The sparse contributions from employers have been almost exclusively on the teach - them - to - read - and - write - and - reckon - and - don't - give - them - ideas - above - their - station level. The teachers have made statements of breathtaking arrogance. One argument for a common core curriculum is that, when pupils moved from one area to another, there would be less disruption of their learning. Mr Arnold Jennings, a comprehensive head and a prominent member of two teachers' unions, said at Bradford that parents ought not to move houses and jobs when their children are at school. In other words, about half the nation's workforce ought to be rendered immobile so that teachers can carry on doing what they like.

When a conference's time is wasted with that sort of inanity, it is hardly surprising that there has been no useful discussion of the vital central issue, the core curriculum. There is, happily, near-unanimous agreement that all pupils should continue studying science and maths to 16. But there has been no discussion of the machinery that could impose this agreement. There has been no discussion of the *kind* of science and maths that ought to be studied. Over 80 per cent of pupils already take at least one science subject up to school-leaving age. Should they study three sciences? Should they do integrated science? Should they study a more practical, less academic science? The teachers, of course, will not raise these questions in public because to do so would be to admit the legitimacy of public interest in them.

The Great Debate shows that stage-managed conferences, in which invitations are conveyed through recognised organisations whose views are already well-established and well-known, cannot possibly produce anything new or constructive. If Mrs Williams really wants to hear the grass-roots, she should invite applications to attend the conferences from anyone living and working in each of the regions. Then, subject only to the need to ensure a balance of interests, she should pick out the lucky ones by lot. But her civil servants no doubt would find that procedure far too untidy and irregular.

Roger Woddis

The Blue Flag

The policeman's flag is deepest blue
And scarlet round the edges too;
Sir Robert Peel would throw a fit
If he were here to witness it.
Then raise your fists and truncheons high,
The Red Maria standing by;
Though lawyers flinch and chummies cheer,
We'll keep the blue flag flying here.

With whistles drawn and walking tall,
We'll bear it onwards – 'Evening, all.'
Come Merlyn Rees or Sunny Jim,
This song shall be the coppers' hymn,
Then link your arms and, four abreast,
Proceed to make your last arrest:
We'll flout the law and prove it true
That pigs are human, same as you.

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Jeremy Bugler

Towards the No-Growth Society

'A bayonet is a weapon with a worker at each end' was a memorable slogan coined by British pacifists in the last war. Today, one can make all manner of strange contemporary substitutes for the bayonet: a shirt, a pair of leather shoes, pots and pans, cocoa beans, tea. There is a very real sense in which the interests of workers in poor countries are opposed to those of workers in richer, industrial nations such as Britain. A cotton shirt is the type of simple product which developing countries can hope to produce cheaply and export to the industrial nations. Chinese textile workers have been doing this very successfully recently. Too successfully, for they have put out of work Lancashire textile workers, and had a strict quota slapped on to them for their pains. Needless to say, British socialists have shown most concern for their comparatively well-off fellow-countrymen; it took a maverick like Wayland Kennet to make the remark the other day that no one is screwing the poor of the world like the British worker.

The popular medicament for this friction between different bands of workers of the world is economic growth: growing economies in developing and developed nations will enable both groups (and their masters) to enjoy higher living standards, albeit vastly disparate. But what happens when quantitative economic growth is no longer feasible or attainable? What, politically, will Britain be like to live in when the economy is not growing exponentially? It's a question that receives only passing attention today (very little from socialists), although the demand on finite world resources and the environmental costs of continued economic expansion are now very much more widely appreciated than they were only a few years ago.

Qualitative growth, in the form of improved services and entertainments, can very possibly go on for ever. Concerts are not very polluting and probably bio-degradable. Anyway, our concepts of what *is* quality change. The only proposition I am putting forward is that material-consuming industrial expansion must at some time bang up against a limit. People have very varied ideas and guesses as to when this might be; the American economist Robert Heilbroner in his *Business Civilisation in Decline* suggests that the 'long-run termination of capitalism will occur within a century – that is, within the lifetimes of our grandchildren or great-grandchildren . . .' Paul Ehrlich, walking around with his *Population Bomb* in his pocket, presumably gives a shorter span.

The chances are that man's inventiveness will help him to push back the limits a little. He can substitute a new metal for a depleted resource; he can move out of nuclear energy and dwindling uranium and into solar power. But the exponential nature of expansion sets a cracking pace; one estimate has it that the world's coal will last 5,000 years at our current rate of use, but only 135 years at a rate rising by 4 per cent a year. Then there are various side-effects of industrial expansion that may trip us up. Heating up the global atmosphere through the massive burning of fossil fuels and the release of carbon dioxide ('the greenhouse effect'). Side-effects of pesticides. Contamination of land areas by nuclear waste. There are side-effects of population growth, and food limits. A Canadian has written of the myriad limits 'awaiting us somewhere out there on our trajectory of exponential growth' and considered that 'our chances of missing *all* of them, by some dazzling manoeuvre worthy of a comic strip hero, are just about nil.'

The Canadian is Charles Taylor, and the words come from a rare and quite brilliant paper on the politics of a steady-state economic system. The paper is set in a Canadian context but today Taylor is Professor of Political Theory at All Souls, so perhaps Britain will become more aware of his work. The foundation of his paper is to be found in one paragraph:

> So sooner or later we will all have to live within economic systems which respect certain limits: (1) a stable population; (2) a severe rationing of non-renewable resources, the stock of which must ultimately sink to what can be recycled perpetually; (3) a ban on the increase of certain side-effects of production, such as the creation of heat or the emission of certain substances . . .

I imagine a robust reluctance to accept Professor Taylor's limits in the Labour movement, although signs of vitality in SERA, the Socialist and Environmental Resources Association, shows some post-industrial ideas are getting through. The reluctance surely has its roots in the two massive effects of economic expansion, at least as they are fondly held to be. The first is the contribution to full employment, the second to progress to a more equal society, not in the misty conjectural world of a thesis but in the real Britain, in which Mrs Thatcher thrives.

Getting on for a year ago, I wrote in the NS ('The Left and the Environment', 16 April 1976) that socialists were at least inherently better suited to pursue policies that were caring of the environment than capitalists. That remains my view but the past year has made me conclude a social democratic party such as Labour has no such theoretical advantage, and indeed every environmental disadvantage. In the actual decision-taking of the past year or so, the Government has under-written more projects that involve a reckless use of resources than I could have thought possible. Its motive has usually been the civilised desire to beat down unemployment and beat up jobs.

At the risk of coining another hideous word, these decisions could be termed instances of 'employmentism' – the concept of providing work irrespective of the social value of that work. Understandably petrified by an unemployment figure of around 1.5 million, Labour has come to look on the employment content of a job as the supreme consideration. Labour MPs are often little more than job-hunters for their constituents, who invariably endorse any project in their region although that project's 'product' may be trivial or bereft of social value or even thoroughly nasty.

The jobs that will come if Windscale is expanded to include an oxide fuel reprocessing plant (producing the guerrillas' dream: plutonium) is the main reason wny local Labour MPs argue for it frantically and the Government listens. Labour bailed out the mendicant-bluff merchant John J. Riccardo of Chrysler because of the car workers' jobs; the idea that it might have been better to pay the car workers' wages while retraining them for building buses (for which there is a world shortage and a social need) rather than cars (for which there is neither) seems never to have crossed the government mind. Then 'employmentism' reached a new peak with December's 'Think Tank' report advocating that the nation build a regular series of power stations, even though people would probably have no need for the electricity. Some of these power stations would be nuclear, probably, thus pushing Britain further down the nuclear path, a direction which troubles many people. Again, the principal reason for the cabinet energy committee's acceptance of this fevered notion – and for the intense lobbying of the North East MPs – was jobs. We seem to have discarded the idea that people should be best employed on work that meets society's needs. Labour has inverted this idea: society's needs are fulfilled when people are in work.

What work is neither here nor there, just as the market economy thrives whether the factories are turning out blood transfusion kits or plastic anti-macassars. Labour seem to have adopted a perverted Cartesian credo: We employ, therefore we are. One might add that 'employmentism', so devoid of social value apart from the job-in-itself, epitomises the wasting away of Labour's ideological inheritance. Just as there was nothing very socialist in Wilson's 'white heat of the technological revolution', so there is nothing very socialist in subsidising an American corporation to produce automobiles. (State subsidy to Chrysler UK in 1976: £40 million. Chrysler (Detroit) profit £248.6m).

It's easy, of course, to be dismissive about job-providing in the abstract; in Newcastle-

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upon-Tyne or Glasgow or Liverpool, providing jobs seems to engender its own moral imperative. But there's a sense in which this task turns in on itself; countless jobs in the motor-trade and its ancillaries rest on a British Leyland brick. Pull that out and the whole pile falls. Some job-providing projects today accentuate this tendency, or actually endanger other jobs. The 'Think Tank' proposes that the CEGB should build a set number of (huge) power stations each year 'in advance of demand' as the jargon puts it. But this programme will probably cause the CEGB to shut down older power stations, (life in them yet) and make redundant *their* employees. The net effect could be a minus in jobs. Meanwhile, we have a newer, yet more highly centralised power system – the reverse of what the post-industrial society may require.

Spin-off of Growth

We are edging further and further out along the branch. The manoeuvre has a desperate aspect. The American economist Arthur M. Okun has evolved a principle to explain it, described thus in a *New York Times* article entitled 'Okun's Law':

> The law starts from the premise that it takes about 4 per cent real growth in the gross national product just to keep unemployment from rising – and much more than that to bring it down . . . On average, it takes that much of a rise in activity to keep the jobless rate from rising as new workers enter the labour force and as productivity improves.

Okun studied the US economy, but the principle must hold for any developed industrial economy in which the drive to increase labour productivity takes place. So we charge onward, apprehensive about what lies ahead and terrified of slowing down. The nearer we approach the inevitable limits to growth, the more terrified we shall become. The greater the squeeze on business profits, the more bizarre job-providing projects will become. Concorde will look like a rational transport investment.

If, however, people like Heilbroner and Charles Taylor are right, the modern growth economy will be forced to change its dress to such a radical extent that it will cease to exist as we know it. The greatest political stress of a no-growth economy – at least to our growth-accustomed eyes – is the question of the redistribution of wealth. Social democrats especially, who abhor confrontation, rely upon economic growth to raise the standard of living of the poor without actually having the unpleasant business of taking wealth from the rich to do it.

Professor Taylor has written of the 'unthinkable' aspect of lowering living standard of the better off in a society in which 'the very definition of happiness' means a steady increase in prosperity as people grow older. He continues:

> And so the only way we can see to cope with the strains of inequality is to treat it with the spin-off effects of growth. The minimal or right-wing hope is that people on steadily rising incomes will not care too much that income disparities are remaining constant or even getting worse, that others in other words are getting richer. The maximal or left-wing hope is that a disproportionate share of growth can be steered to the less well-off so that income disparities can be reduced, but painlessly, since this time the rich are compensated (or anaesthetised) by rising incomes for the more rapid progress of the poor.

Neatly put, and Charles Taylor can hardly be alone in believing that the left-wing hope has been dashed. In Britain, 'maximalists' can feel only a little more cheerful, according to how much the data of the Royal Commission on the Distribution of Income and Wealth is interpreted. The share of the top 1 per cent of wealth-owners appears to have fallen since 1960 from 38.2 per cent to 25.3 per cent and that of the top 5 per cent from 64.3 per cent to 49.9 per cent. Yet the great mass of people in Britain – the 80 per cent of 'wealth' owners from the bottom upwards have only slightly increased their share – from 10.2 per cent to 14.5 per cent. What really seems to have been happening is that wealth in Britain *has* been redistributed but chiefly among the wealthiest 20 per cent. Governments have been robbing the stinking rich to give to the filthy rich.

Environmentalists who make rude noises about the social value of growth are usually cast as elitists from secure well-heeled backgrounds, 'kicking the ladder down behind them', in the late Anthony Crosland's colourful phrase. There's a lot of evidence, though, that Taylor's 'minimalists' are seeing their hopes fulfilled: the richer of society growing very rich, with the poorer sections bought off with marginal improvements. Indeed, the Conservation Society has argued that inescapably the profits of growth go to the entrenched, powerful sections of society. Growth thus inevitably becomes a recipe for increasing inequality. Socialists for growth?

Cattle-truck Passengers

But the environmentalist is still said to be up against it, confronted with what a growing world economy does for the poor Third World nations of the southern hemisphere. Melvyn Westlake, an economic correspondent of *The Times*, has set out this argument with great clarity and cogency in a Young Fabian pamphlet published at the end of last year. ('World Poverty: The Growing Conflict'.) He considers that whatever road of economic development is chosen – socialist, capitalist, or mixed – growth of output is the key:

> Growth is imperative if poverty is to be eliminated. Even if wealth could be distributed more equitably, both within nations and between them, without creating intolerable political tensions, it would be spread thinly. There are certainly severe political restraints to the extent to which financial resources can be transferred to developing countries from the industrialised nations out of the existing stock of such resources.
>
> A transfer of real income of any significant scale would inevitably entail a sharp drop in the general living standards within the developed nations, and it is hard to see how this could be accommodated in the present, and foreseeable, state of popular democratic politics common to the richer western nations.

Westlake can say that again! When momentarily in the early Seventies the price of commodities shifted to favour Third World countries, the cries of distress in the rich nations were pitiful to hear. So economic *realpolitik* demands that the Third World countries will only get less poor if the world as a whole gets richer. Westlake's reasonable belief is that the industrialised nations are the engine-rooms of growth for the Third World, and only if the engine-rooms are booming away will the poor Southern hemisphere countries be able to earn the foreign exchange to buy the machinery and equipment that will speed their progress. Like the workers in the industrialised countries, the Third World nations will benefit from the spin-off of growth.

Not even the maddest stone-ground-flour environmentalist could surely assert that a sudden slump in the world economy would assist the Third World. But there is another way of looking at it. Robert Heilbroner, I think, has used the analogy of a train to represent the rich and poor nations in the world. The rich nations travel in a few luxuriously equipped Pullman coaches at the head of the train; the poor are crammed into crude cattle-trucks behind.

The cattle-truck passengers, on the spin-off growth argument, will gradually have their conditions improved – hard seating here and there, clean water supply installed, a few windows – by a railway company which at the same time is busting itself to make the luxurious coaches quite sybaritic in comforts.

A Trickle of Wealth

Now, the vital question is: how long are the cattle-truck passengers going to put up with this railway company? It is after all, a *helluva* way to run a railway. That it is the only practicable way at the moment does not mean it will go on much longer. The widening gap between the rich countries and the poor is now a commonplace, and indeed Melvyn Westlake sets out the ways in which the industrialised nations keep a half-nelson on the developing nations – through politically-motivated aid programmes, hidden tariff-barriers, buying systems that control the price of primary products. (Bananas are mainly handled by three corporations that effectively fix the price; Westlake points out that a box of bananas selling retail at $5.93 gives the banana-grower 70 cents.) Prospects for the world's poorest 1,000 million people are 'appalling', said Robert McNamara of the World Bank the other day.

Orthodox economists argue that economic growth in the Third World is dependent upon growth in the richer nations. So it may be, but for how long is it inevitably so? Melvyn Westlake dismisses both Third World self-reliance and intra-Third World trade as ways of making the developing countries grow in wealth – as indeed they must. But China has developed by self-reliance more effectively than have aided economies like India; China is one of the very few Third World nations to have doubled its population *and* fed them. Once a heavy food importer, China today broadly exports as much as it imports. The American writer Susan George argues in *How The Other Half Dies* (Penguin Books) that reform of land and political structure in developing countries will do far more to de-

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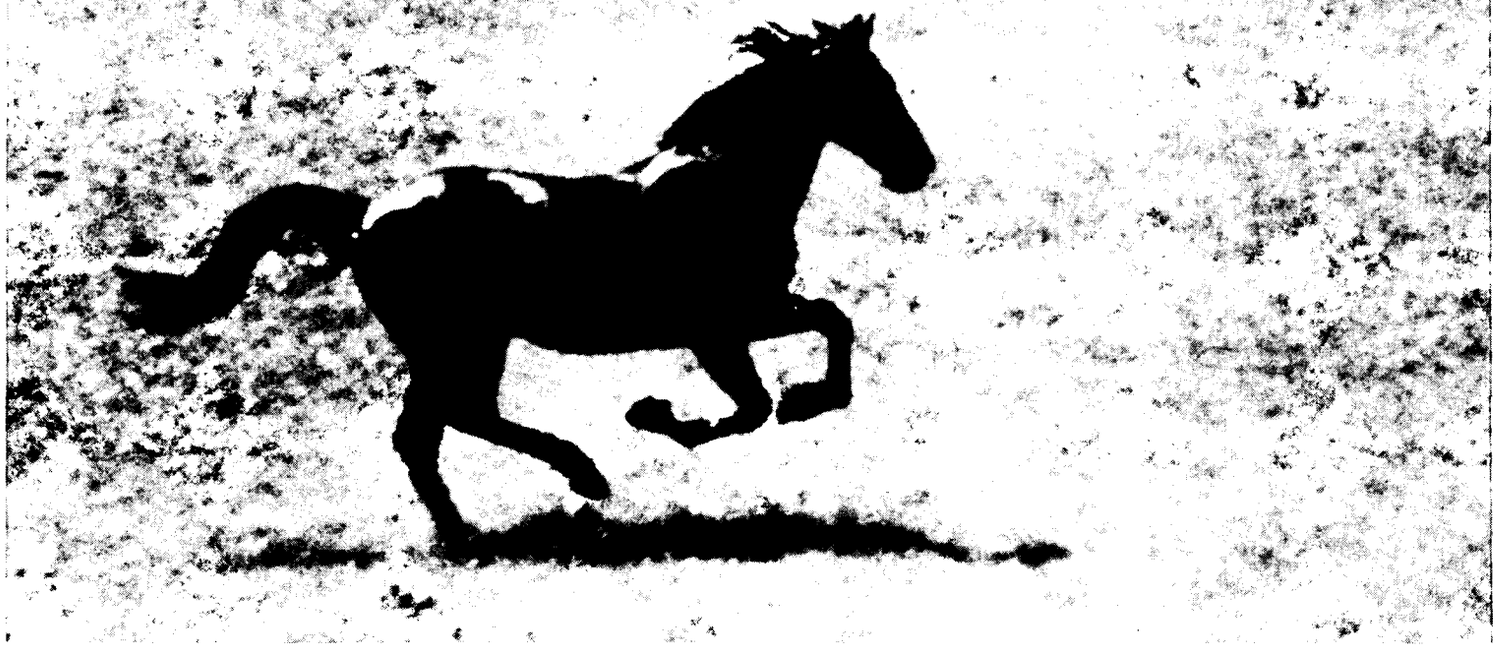
Confidence in Britain



Profits and dividends

The operating profit of Lloyds Bank Limited and its subsidiaries for the year ended 31 December 1976 was £134,982,000 compared with £96,026,000 in 1975. After adding the share of profits of associated companies, Group profit before tax was £147,734,000, 55 per cent higher than in 1975 when there were losses in associated companies.

After the deduction for taxation, minority interest in subsidiaries and extraordinary items, the profit attributable to shareholders of Lloyds Bank Limited is £73,165,000 (1975: £39,638,000).

With the interim dividend of 3.715p per share paid in September, the recommended final dividend of 4.4220p per share will make a total distribution for the year equivalent, with the related tax credit, to 12.5185p per share gross (1975: 11.3804p), the maximum permitted.

Capital maintenance needs

At the end of 1969 Lloyds Bank Group's capital and reserves totalled approximately £266 million. At the end of 1976, after a £76 million rights issue and a $75 million Eurobond issue, they totalled £721 million.

In the same period, current, deposit and other accounts rose from £2,491 million to £10,746 million, while advances to customers increased from £1,364 million to £7,791 million.

The recovery in profitability, despite the recession in the United Kingdom, is encouraging. But we are still reporting our results under the historical cost accounting convention; this overstates profits during a time of inflation.

Regrettably, there is still no recognition of the need, in inflationary conditions, for a bank to increase its capital to conduct even an unchanged real level of business if prudent balance sheet ratios are to be maintained. This need is similar to that of an industrial company for more capital simply to finance an unchanged physical level of stocks when prices rise.

For an international banking group the capital maintenance problems presented by domestic inflation are compounded by the weakness of sterling against many of the other currencies in which its business is transacted.

Nationalisation must be fought

The proposal approved by the Labour Party conference in September to nationalise the four largest English clearing banks, one merchant bank and seven large insurance companies should be vigorously fought.

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The clearing banks and the large insurance companies have always been major recipients of the small savings of the private individual. We have safeguarded these savings by prudent employment of them and our record of trustworthiness compares favourably with that of banks and insurance companies in any other country.

Now doctrinaire "socialists" of the left wing are seeking to persuade the ordinary citizen that these great savings institutions have failed in their duty to industry and therefore to the nation. Mrs Judith Hart has alleged that those who direct these institutions are not publicly accountable and that this is the real argument for nationalisation.

It cannot be said too often that the first duty of a banker is to those who entrust their moneys to him. This responsibility dictates our lending policy to industry, to government and to the private borrower, because we are lending not our own but our customers' funds. Neither does the record show that we have failed British industry. Creditworthy British companies confirm that we have always met their reasonable needs.

There should be no illusions about the proposal to nationalise us. The real intention is so to extend control of the banks that abandonment of our present lending principles can be enforced, and our customers' savings directed into other and perhaps less safe employment.

If, as I believe, our depositors and our shareholders want Lloyds Bank to continue to be accountable to them, and not to these doctrinaire theorists, they should take every opportunity to say so loudly and repeatedly.

The economy–hope for the future

In the past year the British economy has experienced a major crisis of confidence. The precipitous fall in the pound which began in March 1976 was in part the legacy of a rate of inflation higher than that of our competitors. But it also reflected the doubts of foreign holders of sterling regarding Britain's ability to bring down her relative price level in the future.

The government has belatedly taken some necessary measures to reduce its expenditure, but this remains at a level which is disturbingly

"We have advantages if only we know how to use them"

high in relation to its income. The deficit between government revenue and spending still constitutes a major factor contributing to domestic inflation. If foreigners' confidence in Britain and therefore in its currency is to be restored, inflation must be further reduced to a level nearer to that achieved by our principal trading competitors.

Business confidence has been drained by constant chopping and changing of policies in recent years, by the pressure of partisan legislation, and the growing governmental intervention from which both industry and commerce continue to suffer.

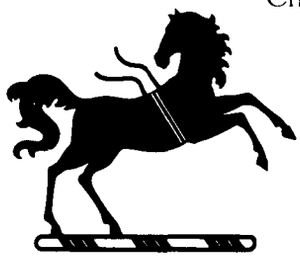
What is required is a condition of political and economic stability in which confidence can grow again.

Britain has advantages, if only we can make good use of them. North Sea oil offers us hope of a better future but it is not some cornucopia which will give each British family new riches in return for less effort. Oil revenue will give us a breathing space; we must use it to restore our economic health by our own exertions.

Group staff

I take special pleasure on this, the last occasion when I can do so, in paying tribute to all our staff throughout the world.

Sir Eric Faulkner, MBE
Chairman



Lloyds Bank

Extracts from the Chairman's statement in the Report and Accounts of Lloyds Bank Limited for the year ended 31 December 1976. Copies are obtainable on request from the Secretary, 71 Lombard Street, London EC3P 3BS.

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feat hunger than aid and 'the agri-business corporations.'

Whether more poor countries take the Chinese road remains to be seen; no doubt some future Henry Kissinger will then gripe about the poor 'biting the hand that feeds them'. Environmentalists might advise them to snap hard: their resources are being rapidly consumed by the rich economies, and the way the wind is, many Third World countries won't have the metals or the fuels for their own progress. They'll have gone – snitched away to make throw-away Newcastle Brown or Budweiser beer-cans, or subsidised Chrysler cars. As it is, western corporations are taking steps to guard resources in other peoples nations; mining corporations last year formed an organisation to counter-strike against nationalisation of their mines in the Third World.

Pessimism is the stock-in-trade of environmental writers, but when the altruism of the rich nations seems so hard to find and when redistribution of wealth from rich to poor seems so improbable, pessimism is the natural mood. In his *Business Civilisation in Decline,* Robert Heilbroner concludes that antagonism between industrialised and developing nations seems bound to increase, perhaps leading to 'wars of redistribution' in which the Third World can make use of nuclear weapons (which all but the very poorest will be able to afford, thanks to nuclear reprocessing and the 'dangers of nuclear peace' as one wag describes the threat of power station fuel being used for weapons). If Heilbroner is right, the 'spin-off of growth' method of world economic progress in the end will be found wanting in the very respect for which it is pursued today: its ability to buy off conflict.

One must return, then, to the starting point: growing industrial economies will have to give way to 'steady state economies' that are in balance with their surroundings. What is fascinating is to consider the politics of such a steady state society and how they might come about. Again, this is pessimists' territory.

Incomes will have to be held down; the privileged will fight hard to retain their 'edge', the under-privileged will become more and more desperate as they no longer benefit from a 'trickle-down' of wealth. Charles Taylor sees terrorism spreading as disadvantaged groups take to the methods of Provos and the UDA. In my guess neither the social democrat nor the capitalist as we know them will survive in such a political landscape. Capitalism and a steady-state economy are probably contradictions in terms, and social democracy will probably go down in the same boat. As James Fenton remarked 'Social democracy only works where capitalism works' (NS 28 January 1977). Gradualism and social democracy will be frail implements in a society in which inequality between classes will either be maintained by an authoritarian regime or eroded by direct redistribution from the haves to the have-nots. In other words, revolutionaries of the Right or the Left will come into their own.

Robert Heilbroner, a social democrat with the intellectual honesty to argue to conclusions he does not relish, guesses that in the long run we shall move to a society with a new 'religious' orientation – deifying the state and a wholly new concept of the meaning of life. He suggests the religious politicism of China today may be the model.

Charles Taylor considers that the future looks gloomy indeed for 'free society' but gives it a chance. He sees the main problem being the minority of people who are excluded from sharing in the high material standards of modern Western society. These people are left out and they can break a free society. 'What we would need in a steady state,' he has written, 'is a refined, relatively static standard (one which grew only slowly and irregularly) which everyone could feasibly enjoy.' A system of rationing and subsidies would create this common standard, and the great majority of people would live at or near it.

He is a bit defensive about such a state and its aura of controls and drab uniformity: 'The economics of Byzantium combine with the taste of wartime Britain.' It needn't be *that* bad, he believes, provided the society can get over (free institutions intact) the period of transition from a growth economy to a stable state. And for *that,* we'll need something of the Dunkirk spirit, sinking our differences to create a new order. Also, smaller, decentralised societies will have a better chance of making this transition; people in those societies may have enough sense of common identity to stick together.

It's anyone's guess as to how pleasant it will be to live in a no-growth society. One can only doubt whether England, with its ingrained class tensions, will attain it with a liberal spirit remaining. The Welsh and Scots, devolved, perhaps will have a greater identity and thus a greater chance. A stable state Britain looks like being authoritarian, perhaps with a high moral tone. 'The worst government is the most moral' wrote H. L. Mencken. 'One composed of cynics is very often tolerant and humane. But when fanatics are on top, there is no limit to oppression.' It looks like the day of the fanatics is coming again.

Anne Bennett

Birds of a Feather

'Could I pick a few of your snowdrops?' I asked this woman and she said she agreed with her mother that flowers were for looking at not picking. So I smiled and said 'Oh I see'. Miserable old thing, I thought, and picked some anyway.

When I was out of her line of vision I stuck them in my pocket and went back to the office, where a GP rang and said there was nothing for it but a section 29 for Miss Doyle as he couldn't vouch for her safety alone in her flat with the weekend ahead.

She was a trim little woman whose life was totally uneventful – which probably accounted for her periodic lapses into depression. For every Marilyn Monroe who kills herself because of too many men there are thousands of Miss Doyles who do so for lack of a lover. She agreed to go to hospital, though we signed the papers anyway as a safeguard.

'Keep a close eye on her: I'll arrange an ambulance,' the GP said and was gone. So I did just that and made friendly chat till she eventually turned on me a look of desperation and fury and cried 'Stop talking and following me about.' Since I was as fed up by then as she was with the sound of my own voice I flopped into the nearest chair and read her paper till she eventually came and sat down.

'About Cheekie,' I said eyeing her budgie, a mute bird whose inability or, for all I knew, refusal to speak caused her much unhappiness.

'George, my nephew, George, he'll feed him if you let him have my key,' she said. 'I've put him enough millet and water to last the weekend,' and she gave me her key and the ambulance came. The ambulance man was a brusque but kindly fellow who soon had Miss Doyle sitting pretty in the car. I handed him the papers.

'But you're coming, too,' he said.

'No,' I said.

'But I'm afraid I can insist on it.'

'No you can't,' I said. 'There's no point at all in my going to the hospital.'

His face took on a serious look. 'She might make allegations that I assaulted her. You know, sexual,' he said.

I pointed out: 'But there are two of you.'

He looked even more serious. 'Ah but that doesn't matter. A court would believe her, we have to protect ourselves.'

I felt there's a flaw here. 'Where would the balance tip over then,' I said. 'I mean, how many ambulance men would there have to be do you think, before they stopped believing *her* and began believing *you*?' Four, five, I could see ambulance men stretching into infinity.

'All right, then,' he said, 'don't come but if anything goes wrong, on your head be it.'

His mate, who was driving, muttered to me: 'Twenty years I've been in this job, just agree with what's said that's my belief.'

'It's not mine,' I said.

I went back into the flat to check everything was all right. I felt strange in someone's empty house – I suppose this is how a burglar feels, I thought. The quiet bird looked at me from his cage in the living room. I thought of the weekend stretching ahead, the stillness. Would he miss her? 'Drat you Cheekie,' I said, 'the thought of you will haunt my weekend.' I couldn't take him home with me; it would torture the cat. I went on to the village to hunt up George who was at work but his wife was in – a friendly soul. 'Oh we'll have the bird over here,' she said. 'Easier than George having to call in there.' I beamed nicely on her.

I felt as good as if I'd found a foster home.

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London Diary

☐ The smartest press releases landing on my desk have come recently from an organisation calling itself the 'Silver Jubilee Central Information Service'. Crowned – and that, I suppose, is the right word – with an embossed silver crest, the one I have in front of me runs to some 37 pages and lists the feast of fun that lies ahead of us, not just during the coming summer but right through to next January. Some of the events, sadly, have already taken place: I'm particularly sorry to have missed the 'Right Royal Evening' held last month at Boston Lincs; and I wish I had known earlier about the Licensed Victuallers Jubilee Ball that took place last week in Hammersmith Town Hall. But the major attractions are, of course, still to come – and it is from these, I'd have thought, that Jim Callaghan is entitled to take some comfort. Everyone seems to be wondering whether there is going to be an election this summer. What, just as the Queen is lighting the first of a chain of royal bonfires, as she presides over her bunfight for her Commonwealth heads of government at Buckingham Palace, as the Royal Yacht *Britannia* starts tooling round the British Isles complete with its royal cargo? Do you see Mrs Thatcher upsetting the whole apple cart at such a sacred moment? I don't – and I've a pretty shrewd idea that Jim Callaghan doesn't either.

☐ Can the Australian Government have started something? During a week in which newspapers in this country have begun to make sympathetic – or at least glutinous – noises about the economic plight of the widows of cabinet ministers, the Australian Government has actually done something practical about the problem. Senator Ivor Greenwood, a member of Mr Malcom Fraser's cabinet, suffered a stroke last May and eventually died last December. Last month his widow, Mrs Lola Greenwood, was awarded a lump sum of $25,000 by the federal Treasury on the ground that her husband's death was directly attributable to the strain of his ministerial job. That would certainly be equally true of Tony Crosland's death. It's hard, however, to envisage the British Treasury acting with the same form of human consideration – though I do seem to remember it once, extremely grudgingly, making the offer of an *ex gratia* payment to the widow of one of Harold Wilson's henchmen who had died virtually on the job in Downing Street. But then he was – just in case you hadn't guessed – not a politician, but a civil servant.

☐ At the first Labour Party conference I ever went to – it was also, I think, the last ever to be held in Margate – in order to top the poll in the constituency section for the NEC you needed at least a million votes. Twenty-one years later the same trick is performed with a bare 500,000. The charge, therefore, that *Panorama* tried to make out last Monday night alleging that the Labour Party deliberately cooked its membership books struck me as a pretty melodramatic one. Of course the requirement that all constituency parties must affiliate on a basis of 1,000 members – or rather on the basis of a £210 annual contribution to head office – is a bogus accounting device; but then so it was in many constituencies when national membership was much higher and the notional minimum size for each CLP was 800. There was, I thought, altogether too much huffing-and-puffing about *Panorama*'s whole approach – an approach that seemed to me neatly crystallised by Michael Cockerell's effortless description of Reg Prentice as 'an extreme moderate'. The one encouraging thing about the programme was the candid recognition by both Ron Hayward, Labour's general secretary, and Norman Atkinson, the party treasurer, that the Labour Party can hardly expect much of a future if its national membership continues to dwindle. That certainly represented an improvement on the attitude often prevalent in the 1950s. 'You know,' I can remember an MP telling me then, 'people really must not think they have any more right to join their local Labour Party than they have to join their local golf club.' Predictably, he later went on to become a cabinet minister.

☐ I've always thought the *Good Food Guide* one of the best advertisements for the cooperative ideal. Nonetheless I was delighted to see that my own favourite cheap and decent eating-places are not included in this year's edition. No mention of dear old ——'s in —— Street, for instance, where the manager is so understanding about credit. And nobody seems to have cottoned on to the excellent little Greek place in —— Street, to which most of the NS staff seem to slope off on Fridays. As for the places that are included, it seems to me that the *Guide* could be much more helpful as a guide if it went into greater detail about unfamiliar types of food. If one goes to a film in Leicester Square, and then wanders along Lisle Street and Gerrard Street, thinking about a little Chinese nosh, but feeling something of a trespasser, and if one finally goes into one of the tiny, recently-founded restaurants, and if one can't read the menu, and if one ends up with sweet and sour pork when everyone else is wolfing down exceedingly interesting things of which one does not know the name, one tends to feel a bit put out. Couldn't the *Guide* be more helpful in its advice, and less of a boo-hurrah performance?

☐ Watching President Amin play yet another game of basketball the other night – and seeing him, as usual, triumphantly popping the ball through the net – I fell to wondering why it is that he remains such a magnet for the media. Of course it is right that his crimes and brutalities should be documented; but by vying with each other for 'exclusive' interviews, and by lavishing yards of film on his off-duty antics, are not the TV networks giving him exactly the attention that he craves? I never thought much of Donald Coggan but his public pronouncement this week that Amin would end up by being assassinated must rank as a peculiarly inept remark even coming from Canterbury's 101st Archbishop. I would have said it was just the type of prediction that Amin will revel in – and equally, I'd have thought, just the kind of prophecy that Uganda's already beleaguered Christians could have done without.

☐ One of the delicatessens near where I live has a new notice stuck in its window. 'No children of school age,' it proclaims, 'will be served in this shop between 3 and 5 p.m.' All right, I'll concede that the shop happens to be in the direct flight path from one of London's more notorious comprehensive schools. But just think of the outcry there would be if any other category of citizens were singled out for similar exclusion; Lady Howe and Miss Betty Lockwood would be in wielding their Anti-Discrimination Act in no time. Not, however, to worry: I wouldn't exactly bet on that particular window's future next time QPR play a home game at Loftus Road.

☐ So the old Arthur Irvine *v.* Liverpool Edge Hill saga is about to start again. Having been soft-hearted about the young, I have no wish to sound hard-hearted towards the old, but I wish someone would explain to me why MPs, unlike the rest of us, are not supposed to be affected in any way by even the vaguest notion of a retirement age. Sir Arthur, I see, is 67. Mr Frank Tomney, recently similarly embattled in Hammersmith North, is 68. Sir Arthur has been an MP for 30 years, Mr Tomney for 27. Each has had what in other walks of life might well be called 'a good innings'. A pity they should both now seem so determined to mar it by refusing to leave the crease.

☐ My favourite British story this week concerns the cabinet office. Apparently it has been much exercised in its collective mind lately over the correct form for the plural of the word 'referendum'. Eventually an official minute got circulated throughout the civil service laying down that the official usage should not be 'referenda' but 'referendums' – 'as', or so the minute carefully added, 'in chrysanthemums or backsides'. Does anyone now want to claim that the public schools have lost their influence on our national life?

Crucifer

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ Mike Robertson wants his workers to have faith . . . the Jewish faith. A millionaire Cornish store-owner, he sees the mass conversion of his staff to Judaism as the only way to beat the Sunday trading laws. And he wants half of his 200 employees to become Jews – so they can man his stores on Sundays. – *Daily Express* (M. Boom)

☐ Drinkers got a shock when they flocked to a Norfolk pub advertising topless bar staff – the staff were all men. – *Sunday Mirror* (C. H. Cooper)

☐ At University College, London, sympathetic staff put aside an 'occupation room' yesterday so that students could occupy without totally disrupting the administration. – *Guardian* (Bryan Boswood)

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University Forum

Roberta Brangam*

Peking Punks in Stalinist Realism

It isn't easy blending in with the local colour in Peking. Even wearing indigo blue doesn't help. The Chinese are suspicious of foreigners and the Pekinese are suspicious of everybody. It is my considered opinion that any alien living in China had best find himself a class enemy if he wants a friend. Only the deviants are willing to talk; find a Peking punk. Public parks are the best places to go to meet these types. Streetcorners are strictly patrolled and loiterers are hard to come by. Try the Workers' Palace beside the Forbidden City; on a sunny afternoon it's a pretty hot spot.

Punks can easily be recognised by their dress. Hardly elaborate by western standards, it is specific; black reflective sunglasses, white cotton gloves (punks wear their gloves even after they have parked their bicycles), white open-necked shirt (only one button undone), kung-fu shoes and a moustache. Frequently the moustache is premature and the effect not all that could be hoped for. The strong Chinese machismo of these punks can put a person off the idea of casual conversation, but fringe types are more likely to risk contact with foreigners than are most mild-mannered public-minded citizens. Too young to be called jaded, punks are disillusioned enough to project a certain cool. This cool should not be confused with the metallic professional coolness which underlies the jingoistic jive of most young Chinese when speaking with strangers. The cool of a Peking punk would be recognised in New York, Paris and London as the genuine international alienated article. Punks are hardly friendly or informal and only rarely open, but they give you a straight bill of goods. Their conversation is not of the typical stereotyped optimistic post-Cultural Revolution variety heard with such depressing regularity in Peking. In Chinese terms the level of their political consciousness is not high. The image is basically nonconformist and slightly menacing; certain degenerate habits may have been gleaned from pre-Cultural Revolution spy-thriller films.

Chinese officials explain, smiling tightly, that these young people are victims of capitalist thinking and bourgeois tendencies not yet obliterated in the new society. They suggest, not meaning of course to give offence, that they have been influenced by decadent western anti-social attitudes. It's time we called a stop to this slander. They can't lay their dirty linen on our doorstep. These are home-grown kids, born and bred in the pulsating red heart of it all. They were rocked in the cradle to the strains of *The East is Red*. They were reading the simplified version of the Life of Lenin when we were reading Donald Duck. They were learning about The Long March and self-sufficiency in agriculture when we were learning about the Battle of Waterloo and which leaf is a maple. We took field trips to see cows and horses, they spent weeks in the countryside feeding pigs and planting tomatoes. While we were watching Rocky and Bullwinkle, they were watching 'How the Militia is Organised in Hainan Island'. The Party had these kids from square one and taught them every revolutionary virtue in the book. Let's lay the responsibility where it belongs. Let's stand up for our degenerates and let the Chinese stand up for theirs.

Of course you're going to ask where these kids went wrong. They grew up with Chairman Mao as their shining sun and the Communist Party as their guiding star, but the revolutionary light has gone out of their hearts. Red Guards just ten years ago, these punks are classified black elements in China today. They have left the clean broad socialist highway for a rutted side road. When did they take that fatal turning? The Cultural Revolution years were crucial. Still fresh-faced kids in 1966, the punks of the future plunged into the revolution with the idealism of youth. They learned about struggle from the ground floor up. They made molotov cocktails in the basement and wrote slander on the first floor. They waited impatiently for the latest edition of *Red Flag* and plagiarised flagrantly anti-Party wall posters. They went back to the basement and made more bombs. There was some confusion as to whom to throw these bombs at; directives from party officials were sometimes vague and confusing. Out of the confusion emerged the Red Guards, the go-getters willing to take command and lead the attack on the capitalist roaders. Following Mao's directive to 'Bombard the Headquarters', the young soldiers assaulted the bureaucracy behind the walls of the Forbidden City. They ousted fat-cat cadres from cushy jobs, exposed army officials with 15-year-long records of corruption, forced party leaders to clear their sons, nieces and brothers-in-law out of the Administration and sometimes forced the leaders themselves to tender their resignations. They made revolution a reality and not just a romance read about in adolescent magazines.

Of course it wasn't all struggle. The Red Guards who came to Peking from all over China were interested in historical culture as well as revolution. They had picnics at the Ming Tombs and chiselled their characters in the bricks along the Great Wall. There were romantic walks in the magnolias at the Summer Palace and fun in the dormitories at night. Leaving home and school and the chance to travel provided these students with a tremendous revolutionary opportunity and incidentally gave some of them rather unrevolutionary and anti-social ideas. Revolution was, in essence, some began to think, a most liberating and invigorating experience, an educational experience and one hell of a lot of fun. Once away from home, life down on the farm looked dull, restrictive and frustrating. Talk about breaking down Confucian thinking; from 1966-1969 Chinese youth had a chance to run the show and just plain run around. They were a great three years if you had the moxie.

The fatter cats and responsibles behind the walls got a bit nervous in 1969 and they called in the men in green to put a stop to the shenanigans. Dictatorship of the proletariat was re-established and the forces of democratic centralism emerged triumphant. It was time for the kids to pick up their molotov cocktails and get back home. For a lot of these kids school was over in 1969. The factory whistle was calling them to join the ranks of the working masses. Down at Machine Tool Plant Number 52 the flavour and drama of the Cultural Revolution was badly missed. Daily routine was hard enough to readjust to, but in the months that followed the Cultural Revolution the news over the public address system turned rationality on its head. It sounded like a lot of those class enemies and poisonous weeds had taken a quick course in Crimes Against the People, had seen the Light, Hallelujah!, and were shifting back into power faster than you could say, 'Long Live the Victories Won During the Cultural Revolution!'. And into the minds of some young workers and students crept a cancerous doubt. 'Wait a minute, have we been taken for suckers?' (or words to that effect) they exclaimed. The revolutionary slogans they had grown up with began to look, on closer scrutiny, suspiciously less revolutionary. A term like democratic centralism was deceptive. In practice centralism looked like a euphemistic word for totalitarianism.

We all know where this perverse kind of thinking can lead and, sure enough, one evening, a smoke in the park sounded to some like a better idea than the Criticise Lin Piao and Confucius meeting. Those who took that walk to the park took their first decisive step on the road to ruin and nicotine-stained fingertips. After that it was just one pitfall after another. They started shooting craps and swapping cotton tickets. They began listening to some hot music and it wasn't revolutionary opera. I heard rumours that some punks had burned their old Lei Feng comic books and their posters of Norman Bethune, but I hesitate to believe that their bitterness could have led them to such sacrilege.

Their years of purity over, punks now face the yawning maw of disillusion, the emptiness of life without faith. It is not my place to condemn them for their lack of social conscience; God knows they will suffer enough trapped in their own world of pessimism and recrimination. For those of us from the decadent West, punks lend Peking some of the flavour of home and add dimension to an otherwise flat landscape, rendered, of course in Stalinist realism.

*Roberta Brangam is American, lives in Hong Kong and was in Peking in 1973-74.

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First Person

Arthur Marshall

At It Again

Despite the fact that the Government appears to be stubbornly determined not to take the advice that I, an old head on old shoulders, give them so freely, both here in our sympathetic weekly magazine and, when opportunity offers itself, over the air in *Any Questions?*, I am determined to press on. I, too, shall neither falter nor fail as I dislike seeing them make needless asses of themselves. And so let me censure them for once again getting up to their ridiculous hospitality tricks (with our money) and for this time having the nerve to initiate a quite novel form of extravagance.

On 24 February, I note, 16 persons were gathered together at Admiralty House for a 'luncheon' in honour of M. Georges Spénale, President of the European Parliament. Host: J. Tomlinson. Among the guests were Jeremy Thorpe (a friend, whom I am only too delighted to see getting anything for free) and, and please mark the name carefully, Sir Geoffrey de Freitas. 'Luncheon', by the way, seems now to be officialese for four courses, probably including smoked salmon at £2.50 a whack. Those booked for just 'lunch' or, even worse, 'working lunch', clearly don't do half so well. But what benefit, do you suppose, will accrue to lunchless you and me from this elaborate meal and the expenditure of our cash? Will M. Spénale, full of pheasant and claret, arrange for us cheaper foreign wines, more marks to the pound or, even, politer porters at Calais? Well, *on verra*, and I don't mind betting *on verra* not very much.

But stay – despite the volleys of hiccoughs and the empurpled faces and the cries of *'au 'voir'* as the official cars drive off, for some people 24 February isn't over yet. That very same evening, this time at Speaker's House, up once more ravenously pops M. Spénale, whose physician one would hardly care to be, getting honoured all over again and being this time exposed at dinner to a mixed company of 38 guests (the all-in cost I estimate at not a penny less than £540). And whom do we find among those so happily present? Why, hungry old Sir Geoffrey de Freitas, no less, wisely accompanied this time by his good lady, thus prudently making a full day's saving in the house-keeping money. But after they've stammered out 'Ah, we meet again!' or *'Ah, nous nous rencontrons encore une fois!'*, what on earth can Sir Geoffrey and M. Spénale have found fresh in the four hours interim to say to each other? Again, whatever is going to come of this jollification in terms of gain for me or you or the wretched housewife's shopping-basket? The usual outcome is an increase in European contempt for our idiotic goings-on. Once more, *on verra* (precious little).

But, you ask, is 24 February, a Thursday and a fatal day, not finished yet? Oh dear me no. Hardly have the soiled table cloths been whisked off after our classy luncheon at Admiralty House before willing, I suppose, employees are 'laying up' for what is described as a 'supper party', with this time Mrs Shirley Williams making, on our behalf, the open-handed gesture. This little 'do' is 'in honour of Prof. S. Kaliski, the Polish Minister for Science, Technology and Higher Education, and Mme Kaliska.' The civil servants responsible for sending the guest list to the *Daily Telegraph* have badly fallen down on the job. The Polish Ambassador and his unpronounceable Ambassadress were certainly present but who else? We do not know. We are not told. How many were there? 10, 20, 48? Was Sir Geoffrey persuaded, possibly against his better self, to dash over from Speaker's House and desert his host, the Speaker in person? I observe that genial Lord Goodman, such a plus mark on all occasions, hasn't had the free run of his teeth anywhere for quite some time. Did he nip up from Oxford?

Apart from this lack of knowledge, the evening contains a problem. 'Supper' to my mind means either something cold on Sunday at 7.45 p.m. and usually closely associated with nutritious beetroot, or something equally cold but more attractive on a week-day at any time after 10 p.m. Yet we see that expansive Mrs Williams arranged that 'after supper the party attended a performance of *Ipi Tombi* at Her Majesty's Theatre'. At whatever hour for goodness sake? The curtain of this 'pulsating musical' normally rises at 8 p.m. The theatre is, of course, within easy walking distance of Admiralty House, but I bet they didn't. One can only hope that the Polish higher educationalists duly pulsated. What can they have made of it? When did anybody get to bed? And now that we are hearing, and how rightly, about the generally exhausted condition in which members of the Government exist, is this sort of evening quite a suitable activity for that conscientious Secretary of State, Mrs Williams? Besides everything else, she had the strain of getting out the Ambassador's name correctly (like a number of middle-European ones, it appears to sound like somebody, well, sneezing).

In addition to the physical hazards, there is, I need hardly point out, an equally perilous psychological risk in this exhaustion business. Darting here, hastening there, signing this, reading that, photographed and gazed at and talking, talking, talking, there must be a danger, when day is done, of assuming that, with all this struggling and striving, something of actual value has been achieved when in fact it has not. It is surely this that leads Mr Healey to make repeated claims that have no basis of truth. One can picture it all so clearly – thunderous yawns as the last document is perused, the last official box closed and locked. Then the rubbing of the tired eyes, the last sip of comforting Bournvita, the slow ascent up the wooden hill to Bedfordshire. As he nestles that curly dark head, with its teeth well brushed and prominently agleam, snugly among the pliant Downing Street Dunlopillos, a contented sigh of work well done escapes the exhausted frame. But what was that sound? An echo? Ah no. Just the next-door neighbour, jovial Jim, contentedly sighing too.

There is another, and rather surprising, danger. Climbers attempting Everest, used to find themselves facing an unexpected barrier to success (I speak of 50 or so years ago, before they were as well equipped as today). They had dreamt for years of conquering it and then, nearing the summit, with exhaustion mounting and the cold and the lack of oxygen making themselves increasingly felt, they found that they had no sense of elation or excitement at being so near their goal. They had no wish at all to go on and succeed. It was all one to them. Mental lethargy was theirs, and this is a predicament that one doesn't only find on mountains. Sir Harold's swansong weeks seemed remarkably lacking in oxygen, though one can hardly claim that with this particular climber even a mini-peak (Hornsey Rise? Tulse Hill?) was actually within striking distance.

Prophet of the Post-Industrial Future

Profligate polymath or one of the most formidable social thinkers of our age? Daniel Bell, professor of sociology at Harvard and author of *The End of Ideology* and *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society*, who describes himself as 'a socialist in economics, a liberal in politics, and a conservative in culture,' is the subject of the third in a series of full-length profiles of leading American intellectuals.

Also this week:
Fred Inglis on British intellectuals
Bryan Wilson on scientology
The Ralf Dahrendorf column.

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Letters to the Editor

Crosland and Gaitskell

Sir, I write to comment on Patrick Heenan's letter (NS 4 March). His contempt for Hugh Gaitskell cannot be allowed to mask his ignorance of the relationship between Tony Crosland and Hugh Gaitskell. Politically they were on the same wavelength – except for the Common Market in 1962. They shared the same political philosophy and were the closest friends. Sorry to shatter Patrick Heenan's illusions – but admiration is no substitute for facts.

DORA GAITSKELL

House of Lords

Office and Self-Constraints

Sir, Despite Mr D. Wotherspoon's claims about what voters actually vote for (Letters 4 March), evidence provided by the University of Essex election study seems to show that declining electoral support for both Tory and Labour parties amongst previously stalwart supporters is closely linked to the performance of the chosen party in government, and especially since 1964. Party failure, as measured against expectation, can only relate to some sort of ideological perception of what the parties are on about, since few people read election manifestos anyway, and even fewer believe the indiscreet promises of countless utopias to come which such documents normally contain. But for ideological commitment, it is difficult to see why anyone should ever vote for anyone else. Certainly not on the strength of their economic management which in either case has, in different ways and for varying reasons, been abysmal.

Governments, Mr Wotherspoon tells us, face constraints in office, which derive from those of the real world; that is, of the non-political world. Because party dogmas do not, as he would claim, take account of these real world constraints, the parties in office are constantly dismayed by their inability to secure their chosen objectives with the means available. Now, this might look like a free pardon for everyone who ever surreptitiously slung their party policy document into the cabinet room wastepaper basket. But in the gospel according to Wotherspoon the electorate do not anyway really want the programmes and policies which the parties offer them, and they throw governments out, not for welshing on their promises but for failing to match up to the electors' constantly rising expectations. In one sense, it is certainly true that electoral demands seem both inconsistent and, to some extent, self-contradictory. In local government terms, they might well expect to combine stable housing rents, a bigger building programme and a higher standard of repair and maintenance, for example. But such apparent contradictions are only indissoluble so long as we take the structure of society, and therefore the constraints of the 'real world', as immutably fixed initial conditions. It is arguable how far the compulsive quality of these constraints is characteristic of the world as it immutably is, and how far they are simply a matter of perception. It is possible that the only factor preventing politicians from radically restructuring society, and consequently altering the constraints operating within it, is a lack of vision, or political will, or the absence of any belief that it can be done.

I take the view that democratic socialism, if pursued with vigour and courage, offers the possibility of restructuring society in ways which would enable many of the substantive demands of voters to be more fully met. Mr Wotherspoon, by contrast, apparently does not believe in the possibility, let alone the desirability, of changing society. Who, in these days, votes for ephemeral and confusing ideals like fairness, justice, and human dignity anyway? Nobody, you can be sure, in Mr Wotherspoon's 'real world', where even the politicians are reduced to serving as machine-minders and apparatchiks. I wonder what he thinks politics, and politicians, are really for, or whether, at bottom, he doesn't secretly dislike the whole messy process.

PETER D. JOHNSTON

8 Kendal Road
Bolton

MacDonald as Seer

Sir, Ramsay MacDonald made his decision to become prime minister of a national government before he ever reached Westminster. In the early days of his dynamic enthusiasm he laid down, like the great public leaders, the principles of strategy and tactics for likely eventualities, and these were:

> The function of the Socialist theory is to guide. The seaman in his voyages across the seas, steers by certain marks, and at certain points alters his course and follows new marks when the old can lead him no further. So with Socialism. Its method is not the architectural and dogmatic one of building straight from bottom to top, but the organic and experimental of relieving immediate pressing difficulties *on a certain plan*, and in *accordance with a certain scheme of organisation*. [MacDonald's italics, and quoted from *Socialism and Society*, 1905.]

This is not a 'traitor' hungry for power, but a wise captain trying to save his ship and crew from complete destruction.

SIDNEY R. CAMPION

13 Argyle Court
Argyle Road
Southport

Sir, Without having read David Marquand's Ramsay MacDonald one cannot be certain whether it is Marquand's view, or merely that of David Watt (NS 4 March) that the Labour leaders (other than MacDonald and his 'patriotic' crew) ran away and put Labour unity before the national interest.

It certainly is a well established fact, which Marquand clearly confirms, that the 'socialism' of the Labour Party was not based on any understanding of the economics of capitalism and offered no alternative model. The majority of the cabinet went along with MacDonald almost to the end, because they, like him, were in the grip of the conventional bankers' and economists' view that unemployment and the degradation of the working class were a legitimate price to pay to 'save' the system.

But when they jibbed at the end, and declined to follow MacDonald into the arms of the Tory Party, is the true explanation not to be found in the fact that the working class was their political base, and in a gut feeling that the Tory policy of starving and persecuting the workless was a crime against the working class? They had no real alternative to offer, it is true. But what has 'socialism' come to in this country, if excuses are to be offered for MacDonald's shocking policies – and if those who drew back, however belatedly, are to be accused of putting party before nation?

David Marquand did not see for himself the effect of the National Government's cuts. But they and the upsurge of fascism, were the cause of the massive recruitment to the Labour and Communist Parties that gave the young people of my generation their first experience of political life.

MALCOLM MACEWEN

Manor House
Wootton Courtenay
Minehead, Somerset

Smith's Eye View

Sir, Having visited Southern Africa last autumn, I read the article on the attitude of the British press towards Rhodesia (NS 25 February) with amazement. Far from supporting the Smith government, the British press has given an almost totally false picture of the realities of political and ordinary life in Rhodesia, and I found the country far different from the racialists' paradise that papers such as yours paint for their gullible readers.

In fact Chris Mullin's article was typical of the blatant anti-white propaganda that has been peddled in this country for years; by quoting the Catholic Institute he shows just how far his naked prejudices have gone. Inside Rhodesia Bishop Lamont is known as the 'one-eyed' bishop, even by many Roman Catholics and liberal opponents of Ian Smith, because of the way that he and the Catholic Institute have only publicised incidents considered to be harmful to the government. Indeed even Ken Mew of the multi-racial Ranche House College in Salisbury, a long-time opponent of Smith and an advocate of immediate majority rule, was so disturbed at the one-sided stance of the bishop that he telephoned at his own expense examples of atrocities committed by the 'freedom fighters' on their own people to Fleet Street. Needless to say, the great fearless and honest British press did not use them, although examples of 'terrorist' (that is the most accurate word to describe them) atrocities are numerous and easy to confirm.

In Rhodesia the foundations for a fair multi-racial state already exist. But, of course, such a fact is unacceptable to the bigots of the British media, yourself and your correspondent included. I suspect too that censorship plays its part in the bigotry to prevent the realities of the Rhodesian situation from accurately emerging. Consequently I expect this letter to be disgarded for 'editorial reasons'; it's all so convenient and comfortable, isn't it?

ROBIN PAGE

Bird's Farm
Barton, Cambs.

Clive as Litigant

Sir, Who steals my inherited wealth, my differentials, my presidency of Rotary, my bound copies of *Playboy*, my deposits in Atkinson's Bank, my cellar, my parliamentary candidature, my 'good name', steals trash. But who steals my centuries'-long right to ridicule the newly ridiculous Clive Jenkins steals the birthright of a member of a tolerant, civilised, non-conformist, open, plural society.

God help Britain if those 12 nerveless, clueless jurors, deaf to Mr Justice Melford Stevenson's ear-shattering hints as to how their judgment should go, are representative of public opinion? Are, then, the lights of freedom going down over Britain? Helped – ghastly irony – by the bruised ego of a political clown.

NOEL RATCLIFFE

5 Cavendish Avenue
Buxton
Derbyshire

Nyerere's Fight with Kenyatta

Sir, The excesses of the Kenyan rich and the good intentions of the Tanzanian Government often mislead visitors. Kenya's larger education

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budget and smaller army do not receive much publicity. Nor is Tanzania's failure to remit receipts from the Community provided services to headquarters mentioned by Jonathan Dimbleby in his one-sided account (NS 18 February). Such a crude report does a disservice to both countries. It would be of greater value to review Tanzania's 'ten-cell' political and social organisation or the reasons for Kenya's greater wealth. A more objective view of the benefits of both societies might be obtained by questioning which of greed or sloth as a human motive is more beneficial to a country.

N. R. EVANS

PO Box 45156
Nairobi

Prisoners' Letters

Sir, Like Ian Hamilton, I felt that *Panorama*'s Tom Mangold had some reason for being scornful about the letter-censors. Then I remembered a case nearly 40 years ago, when I was a prison visitor at Wormwood Scrubs. One of the prisoners allotted to me was a hardened criminal, and he seemed to me to have only one merit – his love for his eight-year-old son.

His wife refused to bring the child to see him on visiting days, but he was confident that she would do this before long. He was certain that she was living with another man, and he was making it clear to her in his letters that he would 'do' them unless she brought the boy to prison. I tried to persuade him that the boy was at an impressionable age and that it would do him great harm to see his father in prison. 'Nonsense', he replied, 'I saw my father in prison when I was that age.'

Ironically, his letters were being censored but he was still using them as a successful channel for blackmail.

JAMES H. LAWRIE

Flat 2
24 Palace Court
London W2

The Dockers' March

Sir, John Davies is wide off the mark when he states (Letters 25 February) that the famous dockers' march was in support of the racialist views of Enoch Powell.

If I remember correctly, not long before the march, some 40,000 dockers were given the order of the boot as a result of the Container Revolution. The dockers, like most of their black and brown mates, have few skills and still less knowledge to offer for sale in the employment market. All they have is their brawn – a commodity extremely difficult to sell in our advanced, free enterprising, democratic country.

It is true that the dockers by their behaviour struck terror in the hearts of their black and brown brothers and sisters, but was it really surprising that they themselves felt threatened? When the free press, radio and TV could not or would not let the people know who was responsible for the degradation to which the dockers were subjected? Capitalism and her vicious twin sister technological determinism have scant regard for human beings, their dignity, their pride and self respect. As for racialism, it is but a figment of the capitalist imagination, too shy to think of solutions in terms of socialism and cultural revolution.

R. NIAK

Barnet

Jones's Secret Ballot

Sir, Eric Jacobs (Letters 25 February) hit it on the nail when he concluded that Jack Jones and his 'Heir Apparent' want a tame press. I have been a life-long trade unionist and held many offices at constituency level in the Labour Party. It does seem preposterous to me that in this vital election most of the candidates are unknown outside their own region or area.

It is all well and good to receive their address etc., but would it not be more beneficial to see these gentlemen in person on television being interviewed by an experienced panel? That way the membership at large would be able to assess more clearly their suitability or otherwise for the job they aspire to. After all, this job is of tremendous importance not only to the trade union but to the country and government the candidate hopes to influence on behalf of his members.

HUGH P. M. HARAN

17 Overdale Street
Glasgow

Official Secrets and the Press

Sir, James Michael's timely article 'No Right to Know' (NS 25 February) points out that the government proposals would do nothing to establish a legal right to know how we are governed. But I suggest they would actually make the situation worse than it now is. The proposal on disclosure of official information for private gain as formulated by the Franks committee made no specific reference to the press and provided no general defence of a belief that publication is in the public interest. Is not everything published by the press published for private gain – even the recent Granada television programme on cabinet discussion of the IMF loan? When it was proposed to make publication for private gain an offence, in 1889, this was openly intended as an attack on the press. They have not said so this time.

PENELOPE PEARCE

Trent Polytechnic
Nottingham

More Israeli Headaches

Sir, Naomi Shepherd's reportage of the Israel Labour Party convention (NS 4 March) contains two errors which should be corrected.

It is not true that 'only Moshe Dayan and his lieutenant Mordechai Ben Prat opposed the new foreign policy . . . ready for territorial concessions'. The floor vote was 659 to 606.

The comparison between Labour and Likud democracy is a false one. Likud is not a party but a grouping of five parties. Each holds its own convention based on the one man-one vote principle. That 70 kibbutzniks elect one delegate whereas 120 urbanites elect theirs is not an example of democracy that the Labour party should feel proud of.

SONJA COHEN
Administrative Secretary

Herut Movement
71 Compayne Gardens
London NW6

T. C. Worsley

Sir, Readers of Philip Hope-Wallace's farewell piece about T. C. Worsley (NS 4 March) could be forgiven for not having realised he had ever written a book. Good literary editor, theatre and TV critic that Cuthbert Worsley was, his claims to fame rest securely on his autobiography *Flannelled Fool*, his memoir of the Thirties *Fellow Travellers*, an earlier book about Spain, *Behind the Battle*, and his rather under-valued novel about the theatre *Five Minutes, Sir Mathew*. In all of these unique qualities – honesty, directness, balance, perceptiveness of character and situation – come through with a lucid ease that masks the difficulties of composition.

To the end, Cuthbert Worsley remained amazingly boyish – a scholar-athlete who never lost his interest in sport and gambling, and an inspired schoolmaster who never let you get away with received ideas.

He was a marvellous friend, and far from being difficult to locate, as Philip Hope-Wallace suggests, spent the last ten years of his life in Brighton at only two addresses. Those who saw him regularly during that period, looked after so well by John Luscombe, can only marvel at his acceptance – characteristically resentful of the limitations imposed on him – of so much suffering.

ALAN ROSS

Clayton Manor
Nr Hassocks
Sussex

To enable us to publish as wide a selection as possible of readers' views, correspondents are asked to keep their letters brief, preferably not exceeding 200 words. The Editor reserves the right to shorten letters.

Rushing Waters

Sir, The idea of using the level difference between the Mediterranean and the Dead Sea for generating electricity did not originate with Bartley C. Crum in 1947 (Letters 4 March).

Theodor Herzl, the founder of the modern Zionist movement, wrote about it in 1902 in his visionary novel *Altneuland*. (In the English translation, published by the Haifa Publishing Company in 1960, the reference is on p. 156.)

The idea is also referred to on p. 121 of W. C. Lowdermilk's: *Palestine, Land of Promise* (Gollancz, 1944).

C. L. DAVID

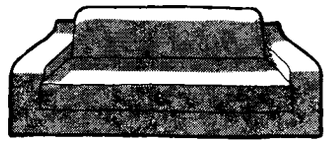
46 Audley Gate
Peterborough
Cambs.

Gavin Faringdon

Sir, Many of your readers will have learnt recently of the death of Gavin Faringdon, a vice-president of the Fabian Society. Gavin was known to many in the Labour movement, having served for some years on the LCC as well as being an active peer. His interests extended to Historic Buildings, the NCCL and the British Fire Services Association in addition to his very great involvement with the party's colonial work. A memorial meeting for Gavin will be held at 12 noon on Wednesday 6 April at Chatham House, St James's Square, SW1. Michael Stewart, Shirley Williams, Dame Margaret Cole and Sir John Betjeman will be among the speakers. We hope some of your readers will be able to attend.

DIANNE HAYTER
General Secretary

Fabian Society
11 Dartmouth Street
London, SW1



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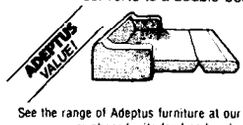

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

Asa Briggs

The Secrets of Society

History Workshop: A Journal of Socialist Historians, Issue 1, Spring 1976; Issue 2, Autumn 1976 UK Annual Subscription £5.00 to P.O. Box 69, Oxford

The second number of *History Workshop* is even more interesting than the first. This is not just because it contains a number of outstanding articles, notably Charles van Onselen's superbly documented 'Randlords and Rotgut', a powerful study of liquor and loot in the old Transvaal. It is more interesting as an issue mainly because it explores further the rich non-documentary sources of social history and because it includes as a matter of policy both readers' and editors' reactions to the first number.

The editorial board – or collective, as it likes to be called – declared itself determined from the start to develop a 'two-way relationship' between writers and readers. It also set out to create an active readership, working on history and not just reading about it. There is ample evidence from these pages that a great deal of activity was already under way before the collective assembled, not all of it generated as a result of the vigorous Ruskin College workshop's initiative. Eve Hostettler's 'Local History in Lincolnshire', for example, directs attention to one of the most thriving and established branches of voluntary historical activity, where there has long been a working partnership between 'amateurs' and 'professionals' crossing all class lines. Likewise, Barrie Trinder in his reflections on the Ironbridge Gorge Museum rightly notes that the involvement of voluntary workers in the Ironbridge project, while remarkable, is not new. When L. T. C. Rolt introduced the third edition of his *Railway Adventure* in 1971 he was already able to say that the pioneering Talyllyn Railway restoration project, once a unique venture, had by then become a commonplace.

Much of this activity is not socialist, and *History Workshop* proclaims itself a 'journal of socialist historians', albeit of a non-sectarian kind. Yet while the editorial collective writes the manifestos, it is the contributors, including the members of the collective themselves in a different capacity, who do the work. Tim Mason, a member of the collective, has now produced two articles on women in Germany, 1925 to 1940, which might well have been published in any historical journal, and most editors, even the most individualistic, would have gladly received Van Onselen's article. Paul Thompson, pleading eloquently for a left-wing school of architectural history to parallel that of literary criticism, pays a generous tribute to Mark Girouard which might have appeared in *Country Life*, and Jerry Kuehl writes an indispensable critical note on the first of five BBC programmes on 'Film as Evidence' which certainly should have appeared in the *Listener*. It establishes four basic facts about the newsreels of the Thirties which must be grasped if anyone is to try to assess their significance.

The socialism can seem monolithic in some of the generalisations, but it bubbles up appealingly in a few of the shorter pieces. Dave Douglass, reviewing Jack Common's *Kiddar's Luck*, a Tyneside novel written earlier in the century (he does not say just when), enjoys the discovery of historical identifications, celebrating the fact that 'the paths of Tyneside youth have crossed over the last four decades': for him Common expressed unforgettably and above all 'rightly' what Tyneside working-class lives were really like. 'For this reason,' he adds somewhat optimistically, 'working-men writers are never rivals.' Edmund and Ruth Frow, collectors of all kinds of books, pamphlets and ephemera of the labour movement, insist that they are not moved by a spirit of bourgeois accumulation. In a delightful article, 'Travels with a Caravan', they claim that they are accumulating them all because they know that

> eventually there will be a change in our social system; that the country will be governed by those who produce the wealth and that there will be a need and a longing then to know what preceded these changes.

The first editorial collective was in my view wrong when it stated that there had been a 'narrowing of the influence of history in our society'. The Frows were already out with their caravan, Dave Douglass was already proud to think of himself as a 'thick bastard', there was already a wonderful collection of labour history materials lovingly assembled by a group of people in Redhill, and even in *its* very first manifesto the Society for the Study of Labour History had urged the need to treat labour history not simply in political but in social and cultural terms. If there was a historiographical trend then evident, it was the movement away from certain kinds of history – diplomatic, narrowly political, constitutional – and a growing tendency to concentrate on 'projects', detailed situational studies, a focusing on a limited number of 19th- and 20th-century themes rather than an effort to develop the freedom to move through whole centuries. *History Workshop* was in a sense appealing to the converted when it produced its manifesto, although the workshops have always been refreshingly free from stuffiness when they set out to mobilise people's enthusiasms as well as to invite them to analyse problems.

If the historical or historiographical perspectives of the first editorial were in some ways wrong, the sociological perspectives may in some respects have been wrong also, as John Humphrey suggests in a letter printed in the second number. Yet the wrongness has not mattered much in practice. Each of the two numbers has been broader in range than might have been anticipated from any manifesto, and most of the authors, including the editors, have expressed themselves with admirable frankness about the methodological and motivational issues which have arisen while they have been preparing and writing their articles. This, rather than the socialism, is the hallmark of the two numbers. An immensely interesting article by the film-maker Gudie Lawaetz on how he made *May 1968* on film raises every relevant question and suggests many other questions relevant in other branches of historical study.

There is something of the best sense of the mood of 1968 in the numbers themselves. History becomes fun, catches the holiday spirit. It sounds puritanical to suggest that it can be something else as well. How do we get into the minds of people different from ourselves? Can we understand if we do not share? Must we not appreciate power as well as powerlessness? 'The one aspect which has struck me most forcefully in the footage of *May 68*,' writes Mr Lawaetz, 'is the way in which the anonymous come to the fore.' History has certainly brought back the anonymous – social history strongly, but not exclusively, influenced by socialist history. Can we afford to leave out the people *with* names, the decisions and how they were arrived at or not arrived at as well as the drama of the *événements*?

Fortunately Mr Mason is interested in decisions and how they were reached in his two articles on women in Nazi Germany, and Mr Lawaetz notes frankly as always how one of the limitations of the available film, vast quantities of it, on 1968 was that most of it dealt only with the debate within the Left. Anne Summers, who underestimates the interest of earlier historians in her subject – 'militarism in Britain before the Great War' – is less successful in getting at the secrets of a whole society. The theoretical discussions in the two numbers are less rewarding (so far) than the attempt to recover a sense of immediacy in particular historical contexts.

This is a more refreshing bias, however, than a preoccupation with the historical dimensions of current issues which hit the newspaper headlines, and fortunately the reader of *History Workshop* is free to pick out the wheat from the chaff.

In reading *The Martyrdom of the Mine*, a study of 19th-century miners by one of them, Edward Rymer, which has been reprinted in the two issues, it is not just what Rymer had to say of miners' struggles, very well footnoted by the editor, which has interested me. I was most moved, indeed, in the second extract by Rymer's 'hip, hip hurrah' not for social but for 'optical' science:

> Let every poor soul rejoice who, like myself, has suffered through partial blindness, but who may receive glorious aid from the different lenses prepared for us by the intellectual giants of our time.

Note, not the opticians, who would be

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entering 19th-century social history almost for the first time to join ranks with the miners, but the 'intellectual giants of our time'. It is almost an anti-climax when Rymer turns next to a visit to Lancashire of Mr Gladstone and a speech on Irish Church disestablishment which provoked Rymer to a conclusion with which most conservative historians would concur: 'The result of Mr Gladstone's speech was an angry agitation in the town and district.'

Successful history writing, social or socialist or both, requires both curiosity and sensitivity. *History Workshop*, like the Ruskin workshops which preceded it, has helped to unleash the first and has directed it to every kind of evidence, reinforcing my own simple view that the main material of the historian is grist. The sensitivity is less easy to develop. Meanwhile, the activity continues, and these two numbers prove that it can be a democratic activity, drawing in people from every kind of background.

Julian Symons

For the Kaffirs

The Great Boer War by BYRON FARWELL
Allen Lane £7.50

An orthodox liberal view of the Afrikaners governing South Africa today would be that they are politically reactionary, narrowly nationalistic and culturally null. The same orthodox liberal view of the Boer struggle against the British from 1900 to 1902, however, would be that they were a gallant people fighting to preserve their independence against overwhelming imperial power. Yet today's Afrikaners were yesterday's Boers, courageous and barbaric, personally generous and morally arrogant, with a horse coper's trickiness blending happily into their genuine piety. If you support the Boers, as Lloyd George and a handful of MPs did during the Anglo-Boer War, it is no use looking surprised if you get the Afrikaners. It was an early Boer, not a modern Afrikaner, who said that every white man surely had a right to beat his own nigger.

A reasonable view of the war would be that an overbearing, greedy and clumsy imperial power was opposed to a bigoted, backward and corrupt small state, and that on the whole the victory of the imperial power was desirable, because it might sow the seeds of a wider, more tolerant civilisation. But who was ever that reasonable? Just as for almost all early writers about the war, like Leo Amery in his masterly *Times History*, the British were obviously right in thinking that it was their destiny to rule South Africa, so for a modern writer like Byron Farwell their attitude was obviously wrong. In common with most modern historians he is almost automatically pro-Boer. His title page shows a contemporary cartoon (I think German, although it is unattributed) of a bare-bottomed Queen Victoria being paddled by Oom Paul Kruger, and he selects the High Commissioner, Sir Alfred Milner, as the 'chief villain . . . most responsible for the tragedy of the war in South Africa'.

This is far too simple. Milner, certainly, was determined that the British should effectively rule the country, and he was prepared for war if the Transvaal government would make no concessions to that end. On the other hand Kruger's regime was honeycombed with petty corruption, and his determination to resist giving anything away to the uitlanders who had poured into Johannesburg hoping to get rich was like trying to make water flow uphill. Milner was by temperament an autocrat, with a distaste for the process of bargaining that seemed to the Boers as natural as riding, but his vision was often remarkably liberal. It was Milner, and not a radical politician, who wanted the Bantu and Coloureds to be given the vote, and who said afterwards that his concession about this at the peace negotiations was the greatest mistake of his life.

In dealing with the origins of the war, the negotiations that preceded it, and the considerable preparations made by the Boers, Mr Farwell is generally inadequate. He also barely mentions the military background in England, with its fierce hampering struggles between the home and Indian armies. On the other hand his account of what actually happened during the war is the fullest, most accurate and best ordered that we have had. He has made particularly good use of South African sources, including some unpublished manuscripts, and of recent biographies like that of Emily Hobhouse.

Act One, beginning with the engagement at Talana and ending with the 'Black Week' in which Britain learned of the disasters at Magersfontein, Stormberg and Colenso, has been examined in several recent books. Mr Farwell adds a number of felicitous touches that convey the insouciance in England when the war began, officers worried that they would arrive too late to see any action, Fortnum's 'South African War Service' to provide them with luxuries, the war fever which enabled Mrs Beerbohm Tree to raise £70,000 for the Soldiers' Families' Fund by her recitation at the Palace Theatre of Kipling's 'Absent-Minded Beggar'. He is good too about the enigmatic Redvers Buller, aggressive but fearful, 'a Victorian Hamlet, wanting action, provoking it, yet afraid of the consequences of acting on his own judgment'. He quotes from a New York paper which tells with relish how 'bewhiskered farmers . . . an unimposing body of men who don't wash very often, batter this regiment [the Black Watch] out of shape'.

Act Two sees the arrival of Roberts, energy and decision replacing Buller's vacillation, the capture of Bloemfontein and Pretoria, apparent victory within a few months, Roberts's departure saying that there was nothing left of the Boer army but a few marauding bands. Again, there are some interesting unfamiliar touches, particularly about the foreigners fighting for the Boers. One of them was John MacBride, who later married Maud Gonne, was executed after the Easter Rising, and was named in Yeats's 'Easter 1916'. Others among the Irish Americans were know by names such as Dynamite Dick and the Arizona Kid.

The last act, superficially undramatic and rarely discussed in detail, seems today the most significant. A few thousand Boers, the 'bitter enders' as distinct from the 'hands uppers', fight on and provide a model for guerrilla wars of the future. They are perpetually on the move, cut railway lines again and again, raid and loot British convoys. They can win no vital victories, but they continually harass Kitchener, who has taken over from Roberts. They easily evade the net of his 8,000 blockhouses, and continue to resist despite the farmhouses burned every day, and the internment of women and children in concentration camps. This name casts a long, quite unjustified shadow. Those who died in the camps – and as Emily Hobhouse and the Ladies' Committee that followed her showed, conditions were often scandalously bad – did so from ignorance and neglect, not through torture and murder. There are two eloquent and vivid chapters on the camps.

In a military sense the war was important only in showing how guerrillas might resist a superior centralised force. The British learned from it some disastrously wrong lessons about the uses of mounted troops that proved expensive in World War I. Politically, however, it decided the future of South Africa in this century. The country that Milner began, with rare skill and imagination, to create before his removal in 1906, would have been a better, more equal society than the one that exists today.

But the war deepened the antagonism between Boer and Briton, and increased the Boer determination to do what they liked with the natives. They resented nothing more than the even-handed justice Milner proposed to dispense under a benevolent autocracy. Gideon Scheepers, a dashing commando raider who was caught and executed, was outraged by the fact that Bantu should be allowed to give evidence at his trial. Scheepers, who became a folk hero, put down in his diary words that reflect the total Boer opposition to the Milnerian approach: 'We Afrikaners will never find justice under the English. Everything is for the kaffirs.'

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Nicolas Walter

Great Anarch

Kropotkin by MARTIN A. MILLER *University of Chicago Press* £11.25

For nearly half a century Peter Kropotkin was the leading figure in the international anarchist movement; after more than half a century he remains the most attractive and accessible of all anarchist writers, and retains the strongest claims to be taken seriously as a social and political thinker. He has received his due share of attention in the recent revival of interest in anarchism, and the past few years have seen new editions of all his books which were published in English, as well as some anthologies of his shorter writings. It has become easier to read what Kropotkin wrote than at any time since his death in 1921; but there hasn't yet been a corresponding reassessment of his life and work. His eloquent autobiography, *Memoirs of a Revolutionist* (1899), appeared in three separate editions by 1971, and the first proper biography, *The Anarchist Prince* (1950) by George Woodcock and Ivan Avakumovic, was also reprinted in 1971; but both books are out of date, and the growing need for a fresh account of his activity and a fresh analysis of his ideology has not been satisfied by occasional university theses.

At last one of these theses has borne fruit, and a serious attempt to satisfy this need has been made by an associate professor of history at Duke University and editor of one of the recent Kropotkin anthologies. Martin Miller's *Kropotkin* is the first scholarly treatment of the available material, and it will be essential reading for everyone interested in the subject; but it is far from satisfactory. Miller says he began his work 15 years ago because he was 'interested in the application of Eriksonian psychology to the study of Russian revolutionaries', and saw Kropotkin as 'an excellent example for a case study of radical motivation'. As he worked, however, he found that 'the problems which were revealed by this approach appeared greater than the answers which were suggested', and in the end he has written a fairly straightforward academic biography, although he still follows his original thesis in concentrating on Kropotkin's 'formative years' in Russia at the expense of his mature career in the West, and he still tends to relapse into psychobiographical treatment of his subject.

Despite the publishers' ambiguous claim that Miller's book 'will stand as the definitive work on Kropotkin for years to come', it doesn't actually supersede Woodcock and Avakumovic, or even Kropotkin himself; for although it includes much information which they excluded, it also excludes much which they included. Rather than the 'full-scale biography' which Miller attempted, it is a restricted narrative of Kropotkin's philosophical and political life. Yet it does give the fullest record so far of where Kropotkin went and what he did for nearly 80 years, and in particular Miller is the first Western scholar who has been able to use archive material not only in America and Western Europe but also in Soviet Russia, where most of Kropotkin's papers are preserved. Indeed he sees Kropotkin as an essentially Russian figure, and is strongest on Kropotkin's life in the Tsarist aristocracy and then in the populist movement. He is weaker on Kropotkin's life in the European anarchist movement after escaping from prison in Russia, and weakest of all on Kropotkin's life in England after being released from prison in France. For this period of 30 years it is still necessary to read Woodcock and Avakumovic.

A worse defect is that even at its best the book never rises above its origins. Miller's method is ponderous and his manner is pompous. The psychoanalytic interpretation of Kropotkin's alienation from his family and class and his aloofness from social and political 'peer groups' obscures more than it illuminates, and the attempt to describe Kropotkin's version of anarchist communism is so imperfect that it would have been better omitted. Nor is the book satisfactory even at the lowest academic level, the ostentatious critical apparatus disguising unfamiliarity with the historical background and the actual narrative containing more mistakes and misunderstandings than should be acceptable. Nevertheless this is an important book, for its potential rather than its performance, and in asking questions rather than giving answers. Above all it is an objective study, as Miller says, treating Kropotkin neither as a saint nor as a sage, but as a man who lived and worked in a particular way at a particular time, and establishing more facts about him than anyone has done before. Miller has not produced the authoritative biography of Kropotkin, but he has provided a basis on which such a work could start. Exactly a century after Kropotkin became the most important anarchist, we can begin to understand him as he deserves.

Peter Wilby

Testing, Testing

Education after School by TYRRELL BURGESS *Gollancz* £6.95 and *Penguin* 80p

In his introduction Tyrrell Burgess tells us that this book began as a survey and ended as a manifesto. It is a manifesto for problem-solving. Scientific inquiry and progress, argues Mr Burgess, drawing on Karl Popper, are based not on the accumulation of knowledge but on the formulation of problems. The problems suggest possible solutions which are then tested for their soundness. In testing, the scientist looks for evidence that his theory is wrong rather than that it is right. All knowledge is provisional; no matter how often the evidence supports a scientific proposition, a single new piece of evidence can falsify it.

Mr Burgess believes that learning in higher education should be like the scientist's problem-solving:

> What is important is not a particular fact or even a particular ordered collection of facts, but *method*. It is method rather than information which gives mastery, and it is method which must be the chief business of education.

Higher education based on established courses and syllabuses offers solutions only to the problems of long-dead academics. Instead, it should help the contemporary student to solve his own problems – it should help him get from where he is to where he wants to be. All adults should have access to higher education, whether full-time or part-time, and they should be allowed to plan and design their own courses.

Mr Burgess goes further. He wants the problem-solving method applied to the organisation of higher education. Governments should not pluck solutions out of thin air – like the creation of 30 polytechnics – and then leave them to their own devices. They should define problems and priorities (e.g. the need for more education related to industrial needs), invite institutions to 'tender' solutions, distribute the resources to the most promising ones and then establish the machinery for testing rigorously the effectiveness of the solutions.

D. M. Thomas

Villanelle for a March Day

A simple gift, this weather has set in.
I wake to my whole body, clear
As the spring turning water into wine.

All morning to be with you! Sun on my skin
And the cherry budding. I see, smell, hear:
A simple gift. The weather has set in,

And I like walking and waiting. It's past nine
You're late, but I like this trembling
without fear.
And there's your spring step, water into wine.

Alone, late afternoon, another sign.
You're stuck on some road. By chance
I'm here
To spring to the phone, warm weather to
sit in.

You've filled me and more. Who's driven
into line
At the lights? I'm miles away. So near!
I turn over, melt to water, burn to wine.

When slender miracles in one day align,
Tall caryatids to sustain the year
Poised like a spring, the weather must set in,
A simple gift of water turn to wine.

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If the solutions aren't working, they should try something else.

Mr Burgess's style is not one of gentle persuasion. His tone is that of an agitated schoolmaster hectoring a worthy but slow-witted class. 'It should now be obvious how post-school education should be organised,' he states towards the end of the last chapter. If, that is, the back of the class has kept up with the lesson. I do not think we are supposed to regard Mr Burgess's solutions as at all problematic or provisional. His curious talent for shouting in print frequently makes it hard to judge whether he intends his proposals to be implemented universally or selectively. Must *all* students plan their own curriculum? Is *all* knowledge to be treated as problematic? The knowledge that I shall die if I fire a lead bullet into my skull may be provisional, but I am not sure that I would care to act as if it were so. I do not deny the need for educational institutions to offer more diverse packages of learning – more part-time courses, more short courses, more courses combining insight from different disciplines – but Mr Burgess seems to reject packages entirely.

If there is to be no prior control over what the student chooses to learn, how can we be sure that the resources he requires will be on tap? If nobody is to learn academic disciplines, who will teach the next generation of independent students? Mr Burgess's own successful course in independent studies at North-East London Polytechnic depends on being able to draw, as required, on the specialist expertise of the polytechnic's mainstream teaching staff, stuffed with its provisional knowledge and constantly available only because students on more traditional courses provide it with a regular function.

The application of Mr Burgess's approach to public policy seems even less practicable. 'I believe that there can be an objective social science, that public policy and administration can be ordered scientifically.' In other words, governments should govern according to Popperian scientific method. This is crass nonsense, and Popper himself warned against it. The obvious objection is that physical science allows controlled experiments, while social science does not.

Again, I do not deny the need for the partial application of Mr Burgess's methods. He is certainly right to castigate governments for the failure to make their objectives explicit. But the implementation and testing of political solutions is bound to remain an inexact science. For one thing, the time scale involved is far longer than in a physical science experiment and, in the meantime, the preferred objectives may change. The polytechnic experiment, announced by a Labour Government in 1965, could only be tested from the time it was finally established in 1970, when a Conservative Government had taken office.

> It is by the rigorous testing of policies that we can hope to make a government accountable. If we cannot decide what would tell us that a government had failed in its policies, we have no ground but whim for turning it out.

It does not seem to occur to Mr Burgess that we might in fact turn a government out because we disagree with its policies.

A second difficulty is that social experiments, unlike scientific experiments, cannot just be dismantled or even radically adjusted when they go wrong. We inject human and social capital into them. We may decide that the 30 polytechnics have failed and that they might as well be scrapped. But their staff and their buildings cannot be made redundant or turned over to other uses in an instant. We are stuck with them, and we may have to accept that for the foreseeable future. Politics is not the science of the desirable but the art of the possible.

Mr Burgess has written a stimulating book and it is well worth reading for its cogent exposition of the problems of contemporary higher education. When it comes to solutions, however, the author is so dazzled by the ones he favours that he fails to test them as rigorously as his own method recommends. In travelling from where we are to where we want to be, we shall have to regard Mr Burgess's route as highly provisional.

John Spurling

Women in Love

The Paintings of Correggio by CECIL GOULD
Faber £50.00

Cecil Gould, Keeper of the National Gallery, takes a dim view of 'the frivolity of the second half of the 20th century'. His immediate reason is our neglect of Correggio, generally considered until the early 19th century to rank second only to Raphael in the hierarchy of painters. But it was actually the second half of the 19th century which demoted Correggio, for his role as a pioneer of artistic decadence, his religious irreverence and his eroticism, and if we have not yet replaced him on his pinnacle it has surely been for lack of such a book as Gould's, the outcome of 20 years' work, the first major study of the paintings in any language for more than 40 years. Furthermore, no previous period could have done Correggio the justice of so many highly-defined photographs (including X-rays, details and sketches, though, considering the price, disappointingly few colour plates) or, without the example of the post-war National Gallery catalogues, such thorough treatment in the matters of condition and provenance.

Gould's own lack of frivolity is declared in the main text of the book by his minute attention to facts, or rather, since there are few undeniable facts still attaching to Correggio beyond his extant paintings and drawings and a few legal documents, to such evidence as an expert study of the work will transform into more or less watertight suppositions. Who taught Correggio, from whom did he borrow and in what order were the pictures painted? These are the main topics of discussion and they might seem to preclude, at least for the non-specialist, the larger question of why Correggio should be worth such a laborious investigation. But this would be to reckon without the effect of constantly turning to the plates in order to keep up with the argument. The mind may be looking for a way with drapery that parallels Leonardo's or an opening out of the space at the back of a painting which may betoken a new sense of self-confidence in the young painter. But at every fresh inspection the eye grows more in love with what it sees. By the time Gould has patiently plotted his course to what he calls 'the crucial artistic experience of Correggio's career' – the frescoes in the monastery church of S. Giovanni Evangelista at Parma, the first of which was unveiled in 1522, causing an immediate sensation, making Correggio 'famous overnight' and bringing him enough commissions to occupy his time for the rest of the decade – the mind has caught the passion of the eye and is avid for any detail however technical. Even Gould grows unwontedly heated at this point, flashing out that Correggio 'emerged, by the middle of the decade, as possibly the most astounding virtuoso who has ever handled a brush' before re-immersing himself in the tricky chronology of various smaller religious paintings, which he suggests Correggio would have been able to paint at home during the winter days when it was too cold to work on the frescoes.

The virtuosity of the frescoes at Parma – the cupola of S. Giovanni Evangelista as well as the later and still more extraordinary cupola of the Duomo – can be only partly appreciated from this book. On the earlier ceiling the risen Christ floats against a vortex of clouds above a ring of muscular, Michelangeline apostles, reclining in foreshortened attitudes on a lower circle of cloud, among which scramble and tumble a school of undisciplined putti. On the later one, Correggio hurls into space a conglomerate mass of figures escorting the Virgin in her Assumption, while on the parapet below the apostles stand gazing up and pagan youths, energetically freeing themselves from their draperies, tend a ring of flaming torches. The wild activity of the scene, the wind-blown torches, the flying clothes, the profusion of naked limbs seen from all angles, above all the powerful figure of Eve, dominating the Virgin's cortège with head thrown back and left arm holding out the apple, take this ostensibly

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Christian orgy far beyond anything dreamed of by the painters of mere Bacchic routs. No wonder the Victorians quailed and even Berenson pronounced it 'quite as life-diminishing as a similar spectacle in reality' – pleasant to imagine him turning away with a snort as the scene materialises over the Villa i Tatti. Gould admits that Correggio, having opened the way to the Baroque painting of the next century, has paid 'the price of most Baroque decoration . . . namely the impersonal, almost the inhuman', and he reproduces three radiantly human sketches of the Eve which go to show how much Correggio had to sacrifice to his technical wizardry with foreshortening.

But, after all, he could afford a bit of impersonality. In painting his numerous Madonnas he went to the other extreme: no one ever depicted mothers holding their babies as sensuously as this. It is not just a question of his mastery of the surface of the skin, for which Berenson praises him and which can be judged from *The School of Love* in the National Gallery (and see how hazy the skin of Velasquez's Rokeby Venus looks by comparison), nor even of his invariable use of beautiful models, but of the independent, irrepressible liveliness of the children in direct contrast to the still, concentrated, physical satisfaction of the mothers in whose laps they wriggle and stretch. This satisfaction is conveyed as much by the contact of the hands and the pose of the head and body as in the rapt expression of the face. It seems entirely irrelevant to the mother's rapture that her child might also be the son of God, or indeed of anyone else. The small *Madonna of the Basket* in the National Gallery shows Joseph labouring away with a plane in the background behind his oblivious family – Correggio's men are nearly always relegated to supporting roles.

In the light of these Madonnas, it is hardly surprising that Correggio's response to one of his earliest commissions was to cover the ceiling of a convent with cherubs, nor that his last and greatest paintings should be a set of four mythological rapes: Io, Ganymede, Dana and Leda. Presented by Federigo Gonzaga to the Emperor Charles V, these had a chequered later history. Two were looted from Prague by Queen Christina's Swedes: the *Leda* and (fortunately) a copy of the *Io* came into the hands of Louis d'Orleans, Regent of France, who in a fit of insanity cut out the heads of both. One can understand his feelings, even in reverse: the moment of coition is not only shown explicitly, it is represented entirely through the woman (since the diminutive swan and Io's embracing cloud, far from being godlike, are scarcely more dominant than Joseph), as pure physical ecstasy. If Botticelli's *Birth of Venus* was the promise of a sensual heaven on earth, these paintings discover its fulfilment. Quite soon after their completion Correggio died, in 1534, at the age of 45.

'He is too sensuous, and therefore limited' was Berenson's verdict. Properly to bury that frivolity, one must hope that the publishers will find a way to reproduce the essential parts of Gould's book in a cheaper format.

Valentine Cunningham

Naming Names

Villa Triste by PATRICK MODIANO translated by Caroline Hillier *Gollancz* £4.50
The Ceremony of Innocence by DAVID MARTIN *Secker & Warburg* £3.90
The Life of the Automobile by ILYA EHRENBURG translated by Joachim Neugroschel *Urizen/Pluto* £4.50 and £2.70
God Perkins by DAVID POWNALL *Faber* £3.95

Essaying the difficult task of prodding and pulling the past into recallable focus has become a favourite emblem of the novelist's tussle with reality ever since Conrad and Madox Ford and Proust made it seem one of the aptest of instructive methods. And that Patrick Modiano's narrator should so remind one of the melancholy stumbling, the unreassured fumbling of the narrator of Ford's *The Good Soldier* is not just a measure of *Villa Triste*'s charm but a signpost to its importance.

What, in Modiano's first novel *Night Rounds*, seemed little more than café chic (or Lipp), improved only by an Eliotic feel for the clutch of cosmopolitan flat-characters that exist and grip you just by a name, looks now, in his third novel, an emphatically more noticeable talent. In a marvellously economic, hintfully refusing tale an unnamed narrator on a return visit to a French town on the Swiss border remembers what he can of his first stay 12 years before. Why he'd fled from Paris then remains misted with hints of police and Algeria. His dealings with Yvonne and the homosexual René Reinthe are equally cloudy. Central figures, they're scarcely less aloof than the rafts of minor people to which the narration, magical as ever about naming, grants only a name:

> Gay Orloff, Percy Lipitt, Osvaldo Valenti, Ilse Korber, Roland Witt von Nodda, Geneviève Bouchet, Geza Pellemont, François Brunhardt . . . What has happened to them?

For a lot of the time the narrator can't even (neatly ironic lapse) recall Yvonne's surname: 'something like Coudreuse, Jacquet, Lebon, Mouraille, Vincent, Gerbault.' The blurb, of course, blurts out bluntly what the reader waits 49 pages for memory to cast up. It's an annoying demolition, this missing the point of a mystifying technique that's painstakingly contrived and deliberately continued. 'Perhaps . . . if I remember rightly . . . I never knew exactly . . . Who was she? I didn't dare ask': these truth-telling hesitations underscore the inexactness of the truth, the tragic unknowability of people, when lesser things are all too known ('I have a good memory for clothes'; 'I can see every detail of the room'). 'I shall know everything, in time,' thinks the narrator, with the customary expectancy of readers of novels: he doesn't, and neither do we.

Nor is *Villa Triste* just a good copy of modernism's nicer mannerisms: very near the end we learn the narrator is Jewish, his hotel room reminiscent of transient Parisian rooms quitted hastily one jump ahead of the Germans. Colonialism and the Gestapo: they evidently had ways of making you not talk.

It's almost equally memorably that the past – our access to it more straightforward this time – haunts David Martin's Belfast. 'The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living': the epigraph from Marx's *Eighteenth Brumaire* makes a text whose fittingness *The Ceremony of Innocence*'s characters could well live without – for under its shadow they die. Events open with Belfast on fire from German bombs, and the young Colm running scared in the holocaust: it ends with him running again, caught in today's cross-fire and shot dead by a trigger-prompt soldier. And he's the child of a mixed marriage, a Catholic who wants to marry a Protestant: a symbol of possible harmonies and ecumenicities.

Granted, the symmetry is a shade too strikingly neat, but its point is honourably meant and eminently takeable. And history's hegemony has run longer than Colm's innocent lifetime. Belfast is not only haunted by King Billy, its more recent infernos have been programmed in the traumas of Shellshocked Sam, the survivor of Thiepval Wood, a ghostly reminder of Ulstermen's suffering for the Union. Colm's father dies in arms in Greece; his brother Jim is killed when he has one of his war-wound-induced blackouts on his motorbike; for that matter Billy Adair carries the frustrations of Cyprus and Suez home to the Prots' cause. The novel's grasp is all too sure (Ireland, like Judaism, makes all its sons historians), its mainly rhetorical gingerings are infrequent, its lapses into bog buffoonery rare, and the fate of its people extraordinarily moving.

Ilya Ehrenburg's *The Life of the Automobile* is a voice from the past (1929), animating with the startling vivacity of Expressionist detail the then recent history of the motorcar. 'This is not a novel. This is a stock-market bulletin and this is political history,' the narrative insists, racily encompassing, with the zippiness of the horseless phaeton whose resistible rise it charts, the human vistas opening up its connected chapters on the conveyor belt, tires (the translation is American), gasoline, the stock exchange, and roads. We watch the rampageous colonialism of American and European business, the dehumanisation of every link in the auto chain from André Citroën to the Javanese coolie tapping rubber. The car, anti-man, anti-democracy, enacts its destiny of wiping out the world. All in all, a compelling tract for all our times.

David Pownall's comic touch clearly got a bit jet-lagged in the transition from African subjects, but his dip into the power struggles of a public-funded itinerant drama company seeking to enlighten Northern darkness has moments of his customary comic chaos. The Theatrefund poofters and other pseuds (like the crazed composer of *Ontario Power Line Pulsations*) meet a gratifying Waterloo. One's also happy to report that the monstrous God Perkins itself is one son of Pownall's giant African mayhem-producing machines that made the flight over.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

John Coleman

Walk on the Mild Side

A Walk with Love and Death *Electric Cinema Club, 29 King Street*
The Great Gabbo *Electric, Portobello Road from 13 March*
C.A.S.H. *Odeon, Marble Arch*
Jackson County Jail *London Pavilion*
The Great Scout and Cathouse Thursday *Rialto; ABCs Fulham and Edgware Roads*

All hail and best wishes to the Electric, whose premises at Portobello Road have for some years now been providing Londoners with a galvanic alternative to the NFT: Peter Howden, Rita Jarvis and other devotees of cinema are responsible for a second Electric, a 75-seater just opened in Covent Garden. The nice thing about their programming is its diversity (their clubs could as well be called Eclectic) and the new place proposes 'Dirty Pictures' – a season of documentaries – and retrospectives of Cocteau and Franju. The films of Bruce Dern will have their own slot, Keaton's superb *The Cameraman* has a run from 17 March, and there is a brave retrieval as openers. John Huston's *A Walk with Love and Death*, made in 1969, has never been commercially shown over here, though the Electric's broadsheet reports it as getting excellent reviews in the States and making hay in France. As a matter of interest, I checked on a couple of American notices: Pauline Kael was respectful but lukewarm, John Simon put the boot in with relish – the female lead had 'the face of an exhausted gnu'. And that the French should have taken it to their bosoms is no great surprise if you think of the timing. Because Huston's movie, drawn by Dale Wasserman from a Hans Koningsberger novel set during the Hundred Years War, is – according to Huston – 'an abstract of our times with a Middle Ages frame around it'. He had to abandon the idea of filming in France, where the action takes place, because of the *événements* of '68.

But how did *I* like the film? To tell true, not all that much. It chronicles the picaresque travels of one Heron de Foix (Assaf Dayan), a student way ahead of his period, who leaves Paris in the spring of 1358 en route for the sea and, possibly, England and Oxford. He never makes it, encountering a courtly lady, Claudia (poorly played by Huston's daughter, Anjelica, Mr Simon's gnu); her noble uncle (unctuously done by Huston himself) who has decided to throw in his lot with the revolting peasantry; assorted knights, clowns, monks and serfs. Young Heron is presumably meant to stand for something revealing, one of nature's neutrals maybe: certainly he is forced, through his reciprocated love for Claudia, into bashing in a boy's head from horseback. Gentle songs punctuate the action, of which there is some, though never of a particularly populated or convincing kind. There is a handful of raw moments – the bloody quartering of a peasant, the macabre revels of a band of players – but all's remote, distanced, elsewhere, and the concluding message would seem to be that old bromide *Amor vincit omnia*: the lovers quietly await their end in an abbey deserted overnight. In fairness, one senses what Huston was after: Ted Scaife's photography now and then achieves the elegant stillness of a medieval tapestry: it was never meant to be an historical spectacular. One doubts, however, that it was intended to be so cumulatively dull, either, so simple-minded and so ill-performed by nearly everyone.

In the margin, here, the new Electric (membership, 20p annually: all seats, £1) is also running a patchy but fascinating Canadian documentary around the unhappy life of Malcolm Lowry, *Volcano*. Written and directed by Donald Brittain, edited by John Kramer, narrated by Richard Burton, it is a right old quilt of interviews, Mexican Death Day footage (too much of this), snapshots, camera visits to his grave in the English countryside, a local pub (inevitably), places where his unquiet spirit rested in America and Canada. One could have done with far more identification of talking heads: it was ages before I realised who was saying what, which is disadvantaging. But fragments linger on: the dire observation, 'drowned in his own vomit . . . fitting'; his being taken round a 'syphilis museum', aged five; the suicide of a Cambridge room-mate who had fallen in love with him (this from the man who tried to cure his alcoholism); the fact that he 'met no bloodkin', nicely put, after he was 25; his ukulele; his benders with John Davenport; the absolute agonies of creating his one memorable work and the subsequent writer's block; the mysterious manner of his death, pills and booze – but why? Why that night in special? The why in general is well enough answered by this compilation.

Meanwhile, back at Portobello Road, a touch of the Stroheims from 13 March. After the appalling hawking-around of his *Queen Kelly* (1928), his last silent movie and effectively his last movie as director, Erich von Stroheim popped up intermittently as an actor again (he had, after all, played a bit part in *Intolerance* among others). James Cruze appears to have been an industrious and prolific director of whom sufficient is known if you know about *The Covered Wagon* and a few others. *The Great Gabbo*, which he made in 1929, is a sure indication that he was scarcely at home with a story, by Ben Hecht with tongue – one trusts – wedged firmly in cheek, about backstage dramas and on-stage revue numbers. The four or five chorus-line outings he mounted here are routinely inept with one exception: this has a giant spider's web – dancers clambering about in its strands as if they had just met it for the first time and the singing hero leaping from it to land with an ankle-cracking thud – and is magnificently inept. But the plot has Stroheim at its centre as a mad ventriloquist, that Gabbo, capable of expressing his gentler feelings only through his pop-eyed dummy Otto. Early on, he kicks out his hearts-and-flowers assistant Marie ('We only get out of life what we put into it' is one of her better lines), then it is two years later and he is a Broadway star, given to dining out with Otto in swish restaurants. As you might expect, things can only turn out badly for such an overbearing, overeating Prussian egomaniac.

A lot of eating goes on, part of it related to the Great Gabbo's act. At one point, having dined, he consumes a sausage while Otto crassly chats up an easily amused audience, only to set about ordering an elaborate *souper à deux* for afterwards. For Marie has come briefly back into his life (one suspects she secretly has the hots for the dummy) and he fails to realise she is married (she hasn't told him). Stroheim miraculously imports an element of pathos as his ego crumbles, goes wild as the company take their bows, is fired and last glimpsed watching his name being removed from the marquee lights. This final scene brought to mind a Herman Weinberg anecdote about *Foolish Wives*, which is convenient, as a none-too-sound print of that very remarkable film (1921) is also on view at the Electric. As usual with Stroheim, the budget grew and grew until the front office decided to capitalise on their potential losses, stretching things a shade to be able to publicise the film as the first-ever to cost a million dollars. 'Universal had put up an electric sign on Broadway, changed weekly as the production costs mounted. They spelled my name in lights as "$troheim". A lot of good that did me!' Even in this print, and perhaps my memory serves me wrong in suggesting there was a better one around, *Foolish Wives* is to be seen, and not merely as an extraordinary instance of what Stroheim could get away with in innuendo and beyond.

Coming reluctantly to this week's commercial product, I shall first strike a happy note. A thoroughly enterprising distributor is chancing his arm on a revival of Martin Scorsese's *Mean Streets*. I reviewed this at admiring length when it appeared at the Academy nigh on three years ago and have no space to recapitulate. Suffice it to say they don't come any finer, not even from Mr Scorsese (and that includes *Taxi Driver*), than this controlled, impressionistic portrait of a doomed bunch of Little Italy minor-league hoodlums. It may be caught now at the Odeon, Kensington; from 13 March at the Odeon, Swiss Cottage, and the Screen on the Green.

C.A.S.H. shares only bad taste and Elliott Gould with *M*A*S*H*: Mr Gould does a Jerry Lewis as a guinea-pig for new army gases who vengefully incapacitates a township to rob its banks and regain his drooped manhood. *Jackson County Jail*, exec. prod. Roger Corman, has Yvette Mimieux robbed, raped, escaped from the can of the title with a virile murderer, chased, finally

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frozen as she gazes from a police car at her companion, gunned-down on an American flag and a painted STOP sign (*great* touches of irony, eh?): I froze earlier. *The Great Scout and Cathouse Thursday*, with Lee Marvin and Oliver Reed at their considerable worst, must be left where it lies. Among its beauties is a dare-we-say? running gag about gonorrhoea.

Theatre

Benedict Nightingale

Epicophobia

Illuminatus *Cottesloe*
Summerfolk *Lyttleton*
A Thought in Three Parts *ICA*

The persistent sound of hammering somewhere behind the first performance of *Illuminatus* indicated that even today, nearly a year since Peter Hall led his advance troops over its drawbridge and into its concrete keep, the National Theatre is not quite finished. Maybe the builders are doomed to toil there forever, like the men painting the Menai Bridge. But at least we now have all three essentials: orthodox Lyttleton, less orthodox Olivier and, finally, unorthodox Cottlesloe, a bare rectangle surrounded by three tiers of balconies. Much, clearly, can be done with this 'pit', as my ticket last Friday chose to describe it. It can be handed over in toto to the performers, who can then cavort on the flat, pack it with podia, or, presumably, prise up the boards, fill the well below with water, and present the first submerged, besnorkeled production of *Lear*. Alternatively, the actors can share the floor with part of the audience, planting a stage one end and gently-raked rows of seats the other, thus increasing the capacity to some 400. That was the approximate number which began watching *Illuminatus*, perched in front of a toyshop proscenium solemnly inscribed 'The Science Fiction Theatre of Liverpool'; and it is no fault of the architects if that wasn't also the number that ended watching *Illuminatus*, half a day later. Such shrinkage as occurred would be better blamed on what someone in the show nicely calls 'epicophobia', the overwhelming terror of extremely long theatrical performances.

Ken Campbell's spectacular started at 2 o'clock on a sunny afternoon and was still rattling along as the chimes of midnight approached. By then I had got my second wind, my fourth, and even my sixth: it was that seventh wind which eluded me. The unvarying blackness of the floors, balconies and ceiling began to seem oppressive, the theatre as a whole to look more and more like some sinister Lubyanka within whose grim walls I would surely perish. The urge to escape finally became irresistible during a scene in which the cast, still maddeningly chirpy, was confronted with Leviathan, the pyramid-shaped creature that apparently lurks in some far-flung ocean deeper than fathom can sound. A marriage of sorts was, I think, being mooted between this monster and the flashing, amusement-arcade computer whose voice-box was played, with silken elegance, by John Gielgud; but I cannot be sure, because I was no longer discriminating very accurately between objective reality and my own zonked imaginings. Perhaps I myself was only a robot critic, invented by Mr Campbell and programmed to write rave reviews of his work. And what of the man from *The Times* beside me? His kindly countenance had that spectral, greenish aspect which, worn by a character in fantasy-fiction, usually means it's time for him to return to his coffin. It was clearly essential for both of us to seek the bracing air outside, and we did.

Mark you, the show is fun for a long time, a lavish mixture of whimsy, satire, vague mysticism, sexual display and political paranoia derived, so the programme informs us, from the novels of Robert Shea and Robert Anton Wilson. The hero is a radical journalist, a prim Candide able to tell the undulating lovely seducing him that she 'doesn't meet the criteria of my value-system'. His investigation into an arcane organisation called the Illuminati takes him first to a town called Mad Dog, Texas, on to a nuclear submarine commanded by the latter-day Leonardo who leads the Legion of Dynamic Discord, back to America to sell treasures from Atlantis to the Mafia, in and out of black masses, and eventually to the bottom of a lake filled with dead Nazis, who are to be reanimated by a rock group called the American Medical Association and sent marching in jackboots against Soviet Russia. As the tale spins and swivels unpredictably along, a curious medley of characters seek the limelight, including Jung, Herman Hesse, a fortune-teller called Mama Sutra, a Satanist called Padre Pederastia, the President of the US and a demented midget whose lifework is subverting authority by sabotaging official posters. Don't ask me how or where they all fit in, because fitting-in is scarcely what is required of them. The main object is to crowd the stage with surprise and colour, one fulfilled with unflinching gusto by Chris Langham, Prunella Gee, Wayne Bell, Neil Cunningham, Uncle Tom Cobbleigh and all.

Just occasionally, hints of more earnest intentions freeze the festivities. The ultimate villains of the saga may be the Longo (or was it Lonhro?), outer-space ogres who landed on Earth millennia ago and are apparently still in residence in that cabalistic structure known as the Pentagon, or may be the Illuminati, that conspiracy of fascists, communists, five-star generals, Jesuits and 'thirty-second-degree freemasons'. Either way, it is clear whom and what Mr Campbell, with his anarchist bent, wishes to attack. The enemy, as so often, is established society, variously indicted of manufacturing deadly weapons, forbidding hallucinogenic drugs, opening private mail, encouraging women to believe they suffer from penis envy, destroying love and generally reducing the world's citizenry to compliant zombies. 'We must give up our sacrifices, not our joys,' someone intones, and intones again, just in case we'd missed the drift. One of sci-fi's more honourable functions is, of course, to criticise the present through metaphor, and warn us of what will happen if it remains unreformed; and it may be that the Shea-Wilson novels, with their sweeping mistrust of political power, had a certain rallying ring when the White House belonged to Mr Nixon (named, incidentally, as a practising Illuminatus). But even then their more solemn sentiments must have been swamped by the spoof cops, singing dolphins, orgiastic encounters with giant apples, tarot cards, dissertations on the magic properties of the number 23, and all the wildness, woolliness and general imaginative cheek so superabundantly on offer.

A skinnier week would mean more attention for the lopped and reconstructed version of Gorki's *Summerfolk* Peter Stein's Schaubuhne briefly brought to the National from Berlin. It dawdled along, a detailed, observant but somewhat dull picture of the bourgeoisie in decay that left me nostalgic for the curter, less atmospheric production the RSC offered three years ago. But I prefer to use my last words defending Wallace Shawn's trio of one-acters where it can and should be defended, against accusations of pornography. The subject is the way we reduce relationships to fretful, self-conscious and entirely loveless rituals, in and out of bed: not a line usually taken by Times Square peddlers. The trouble, I think, is repetitiousness, monotony, satiric heavy-handedness, especially in the second and most sexually athletic of the plays. Within a few moments we've noted the incongruity of the artless, good-scout chatter exchanged by Mr Shawn's adolescents as they randomly hump each other, and after that there's nothing to note but more of the same. Themes need variations if they are to keep us content.

Television

Ian Hamilton

T. T. F. N.

I was just thinking the other day that it's been ages since I've seen a decent Temporary Fault. Sad really, since for me at least those regular old-style T.F.'s used to provide some of television's most energising moments. Brisk, open-ended, hortatory, they could arouse whole households from deep torpor, bring back grannies from the dead, break marriages and even kill: there is the famous instance of the German football fan whose box went wrong during a key moment of the 1966 World Cup – the ardent Hun kicked his set to pieces and then hanged himself in the bathroom. He just didn't know the score.

Vivacious viewing of this kind is rare nowadays; we've all got used to depending on the box to deliver without interruption. Odd, therefore, you might think, that Saturday's *Match of the Day* (BBC-1) ground to a halt at just about the moment when millions were debating whether or not to switch over to the Conteh fight on

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ITV. I myself had gone to some lengths to avoid catching the result (the fight had taken place earlier that evening) and had reckoned myself safe once the football was in full swing. I just hadn't bargained on them springing a T.F. Before I, or anyone, had any chance of diving for the button, there was Hill, delighted to sneak in the news that Conteh had wrapped things up in three. In other words, don't bother – stick with us.

I'm not, of course, saying that they planned it; just that they enjoyed it, and that the power to ruin everybody's pleasure in some rival channel's show ought to be subject to restraints. After all, they're presumably not allowed to tell you whodunnit, or to provide advance résumés of competing documentaries, or to warn you what bad jokes the other side has up its sleeve. Not quite the same, agreed, but similar – and dashed unsporting. As it was, I did watch the fight, or what was left of it, and got much pleasure from the commentator's efforts to explain away the 'collision of heads' that had led to Conteh's victory. Definitely accidental, he murmured, as we admired in slow-motion the unerring accuracy with which Conteh's head progressed towards the exposed eyebrow of his foe. With 45 minutes of television time left to play with, it *had* to be accidental; Conteh could have set about his opponent with an ice pick and no one would have dared to admit that he'd intentionally cut things short.

Earlier on the same night, there was more inadvertent violence in *100 Not Out* (BBC-2), a centenary survey of the cricket war between England and Australia. The grating cadences of John Arlott have done much over the years to dissuade me from a total involvement with the game, but even he seemed an acceptable ingredient in the nostalgic stew. There was many a grainy, stiff-limbed clip to corroborate claims made for bygone greats, and quite a few memorable anecdotes. And it did us no harm at all to see Larwood terrorising the cowed Aussie with his 'leg-theory bowling', as they called it then. In general, bowlers are bound to come out of these round-ups more impressively than batsmen; you can show wickets being skittled, but it takes days to build an innings. Odd, then, to have no film of Trueman in performance; he was named briefly and we saw him standing on the steps of a pavilion but, unless he was too fast for me, no action. Is he still finding people to offend?

Taste for Adventure (BBC-2) is a new series about odd ways to make a buck, and it seems that its emphasis will be on nutty sports. This week was all about a girl rodeo champion and next week's item is called *Bangkok Boxer*. Hard for a male to get nothing out of the spectacle of lissom lovelies sweating on the backs of bulls ('Feel it, Susy, feel it; you can do it!' yells the coach) but in spite of the odd broken collar bone and ruptured spleen it all got a bit tedious quite early on. And the why-do-you-do-this-angle was utterly thwarted by the main girl not really knowing: 'It's because I love it, it's a personal challenge.' Words we're doomed to hear again, week after week.

The Galton and Simpson Playhouse (Yorkshire) had its usual mix of repartee and heaving pathos. Last week we had two ex-military buffers who'd been locked together in organised bachelorhood for 30 years ('Just because a man doesn't like women it doesn't mean he's a poof.' Oh yeah?) and are now on the brink of settling for a contented senility. One of them tries to break out by pretending he's about to get married and take off up the Amazon with his child bride. The other, indignant at first, chokes back his tears, says manly goodbyes and is left to carry on his half of their routine. A feelingful split-second and then bang, back come the laughs, the friend and – guess what – the show ends with the pair of them sitting at the same table, drinking the same drinks, saying the same things as when we first . . . well, it's a formula, and these two are as good at it as anyone.

By the time this notice appears, it is to be hoped that the row provoked by Yorkshire Television's first-rate investigation into the plight of the 'single homeless' will be on the boil. If the facts presented about those housing organisations which have been taking cash from the GLC are even half-correct, it's a foul business – grants collected to repair houses that don't exist, repairs paid for that haven't been done, cheap labour hired and work sheets fiddled, and a fair bit of thuggish intimidation waiting in the wings should any one get funny. On the face of it, Yorkshire's case seemed overwhelming and no doubt the villains will get nabbed; more important, though, we were also shown – by means of two moving case-histories – the extent of the bureaucratic heartlessness that has allowed the racket to prosper, and then managed to ignore its prospering.

Architecture

Leo Plendello

Listlessness

One of the few guffaws to be had from the Crossman *Diaries* arises from the occasion when, back in 1964, our zestful new Minister of Housing welcomed a distant cousin one Sunday at Prescote Manor and asked him what he did for a living: to which the youth had to confess that he worked for Crossman's own department, 'listing' historic buildings. Baffled and quite unaware of what this meant, Crossman pried further, only to discover that his precious Prescote was itself 'listed'. In other words, a system over which he presided had scheduled his house without his so much as knowing of its existence.

The incident perfectly illustrates the mystery and ignorance that prevail, when it comes to listing, from the very top downwards. Few people understand properly what listing is or how it works. Now it seems, as the long-awaited backlash against conservation gets under way, the uncertainties that the system provokes are being exploited. A recent correspondent in the *Guardian* voiced a view increasingly favoured by property-owners, that buildings should only be listed 'if a definite practical function and adequate finance for their maintenance could be guaranteed'. This of course would be a landlords' charter for neglect and evasion, and is unlikely to prevail. Yet cleverly applied pressure of this kind is beginning to wear down an increasingly complaisant DoE. Lady Birk, the Minister in charge of its Directorate of Ancient Monuments and Historic Buildings, announced in a notorious speech last October that 'in the past we have been listing too many marginal buildings, particularly those of the later 19th century . . . In future we shall not be giving so many marginal buildings the benefit of the doubt'.

There are signs that this pernicious clarion call, made with scant reference to the Historic Buildings officials, is being thoroughly played down at Savile Row. But many local councils have seized the excuse to give in to outside pressures. One very large planning authority has recently been told to crack down on 'spot-listing', that is to say last-minute applications for listing of buildings in immediate danger, because of 'strong protests from surveyors and the legal profession', those ever-efficient lobbyists.

'Marginal' is a smart word with many and sinister implications, but for Lady Birk and her experts it clearly means buildings which they know nothing about or which might give them trouble. To understand this, it is necessary to look at her newly reorganised Directorate in a little detail. It was not so

Peter Redgrove

Dust Does Not Sleep

Where is there any dust!
I travel up the corridors of the bird's voice,
There is a green meadow off the glacier,
There is a moth in the skull, all that's left of him,
A glow-worm in the skull; in the next-door tomb
A skeleton sits with glow-worm studs.
The seamoths flutter above the wave-crests;
The little spiders: the looms with eyes;
The water-castle in the tin cup, the trembling
Mirrors and curved corridors; how the dry
Pillow drinks from me, how the parched feathers
Of the rain-birds drink from me!

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long ago that the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, a body on whose information the DoE relies heavily for listing purposes, had to be dragged kicking and screaming beyond 1714 as the terminal date for its researches. Nowadays the DoE's policy is to list almost anything, however scruffy, that predates 1840, to try and include the 'better' buildings of between 1840 and 1914, and grudgingly to admit just a few special ones erected between 1914 and 1939.

As a result, the Directorate's knowledge is still heavily biassed in favour of early periods. Its underpaid and overworked investigators can swop stories no end on cruck beams and crinkle-crankle walls, but cannot muster so much expertise on later architecture. In general they are discouraged from research and allowed to assess buildings for listing purely on the frail criterion of their eyes. All might still be well if the heads of the Directorate would systematically adopt the free advice and scholarship that outside bodies and individuals shower upon them, but this they frequently show a capricious reluctance to do. Antony Dale, the last chief investigator, used pigheadedly to discriminate against brick buildings and in favour of stucco ones, but he was at least decisive. In the hands of his successor, Molly Blomfield, recommendations and advice are simply shelved.

For purposes of assessment buildings are divided into three grades (I, II*, and II) according to their supposed architectural merit. The great majority of buildings fall into the Grade II category. But by another abdication the DoE has recently ('for a trial three-year period') devolved all decisions about alterations to Grade II buildings to regional planning authorities alone. These authorities often lack historic expertise and may be tempted because of local considerations to pass things on the nod. A simple example will illustrate this. The London Borough of Hammersmith possesses a very fine early estate at Old Oak which it will not designate as a conservation area lest this should hamper its repairs programme; this, at one point before money ran out, entailed the methodical substitution of metal windows for the thick wooden ones that were essential to the whole estate's design. To provide a measure of protection, the DoE agreed to list a sample of the best houses Grade II. But now if Hammersmith were to start their repairs again, only the GLC could stop them, and this they would be reluctant to do lest it should sour relations with one of their constituent boroughs.

A similar problem arises because of a huge loophole in the historic buildings legislation, by which many properties are exempt from the normal procedures for listed building consent. Anglican and Catholic churches are governed by a separate and inadequate system of protection. Government and all crown properties (including hospitals and army buildings) are also exempt, and though plans for altering them are usually submitted to local authorities for 'consultation', the authorities, recognising that they have no statutory powers to stop any proposal, will almost always accept the inevitable. This is the way in which parts of Sandringham have been demolished and great national institutions like the British Museum and the Victoria and Albert (and next, apparently, the Natural History Museum) have been able to maul their historic interiors.

As crucial as the grading of a building is the 'description' that accompanies it on the official list – the precise definition of what is listed. Here the whole system continually breaks down. The DoE has always been obsessed with useless physical descriptions written in a kind of architectural mumbo-jumbo unintelligible to the layman. Some of these degenerate into farce. One Yorkshire church is statutorily alleged to comprise 'wave aisles and chancel. No tower but a gable bellest tunnel flanking the west front could breaking into its gable . . . crazed nibble walls'. More seriously, nine out of ten descriptions refer only to exteriors and can easily be manipulated by wily developers and their lawyers to suggest that only the outside of a building is listed. On the precise truth about this the law is vague, though the popular belief that only the interiors of Grade I and II* buildings are listed is a fallacy. The reason for the omissions is clear, however. Since the lists for some areas are as much as 20 years out of date, speed is vital; investigators are discouraged by their superiors as much as by owners from looking at interiors because this slows them up. Therefore the DoE and most local authorities adopt a deliberate policy of 'facadism', a spin-off from the shallow philosophy of townscape – anything goes as long as the front stays. This is careless anywhere but disastrous in inner-city areas, where good interiors are a rare asset. For instance in The Lanes area of Carlisle, currently threatened by comprehensive redevelopment, many later fronts mask old interiors. In the great cities it is common to see meaningless skeletons of historic buildings propped up by scaffolding, their innards torn asunder without full investigation.

Because of the DoE's inefficiency and tardiness on listing questions, some local authorities have started compiling their own registers of historic buildings. Some too have been actually asked to prepare complete drafts for official listing, a task which has not proved gratifying when the DoE has refused to take a proportion of the recommendations. By this manoeuvre the DoE is again compounding its failures, for clearly local authorities will be tempted to omit from their draft lists what is not in their own interests to include.

To sum up, though better legislation is needed, most historic buildings could be excellently served under the present system if the DoE would merely face its responsibilities fully and openly. Since the Directorate cannot quickly attain perfect knowledge of Britain's buildings, it would be only honest to use the lists as mere flexible, working hypotheses, to which continual alterations and additions might be welcome. Much more important than precise designation on a list is to make sure that a building is fairly considered, thoroughly investigated and fully recorded when a proposal to demolish or alter it comes forward. That is why the DoE has to reassert its pre-eminence over the local authorities in historic buildings matters and to broaden its areas of inadequate expertise, instead of shrinking timidly at the first pressure from property interests. Peter Walker used, appallingly, to define the DoE as where the buck stops. Less buck-passing and more buck-facing and chasing please, Baroness Birk.

Cookery

Hilary Spurling

Cats Taile in Milk

The spice trade has always held a particular charm for northern peoples, especially the English who traditionally pawned their all for cloves, pepper, ginger and dried fruit. In the first half of the 17th century cinnamon cost anything up to five shillings a pound – perhaps double what a farm labourer could hope to earn in a week – and Alicante raisins ten shillings a gram. Two hundred and fifty years before that Richard II's cooks made meat pies in stripes, colouring the various layers red with sandalwood, yellow with saffron, green with parsley and, for extreme occasions, black with fried blood.

Here is a recipe for spinach-and-parsley sauce to serve with chicken which stops short of anything so exotic. It was written down for Lady Elinor Fettiplace round about the time James I came to the throne, but presumably looks back well into the previous reign. It makes a pretty, grass-green sauce, thickened with eggs and flavoured with wine, spices and dried fruit: rich and strange and rather delicious if you like highly seasoned food:

> Take water & spinage, & whole mace, some parselie, & currance and reasins of the sunne, & boile it till the water bee almost boyled away, then put in some sack & marrow & dates, & whole pepper & ginger grated, & some prunes, & sugar, & boile it all together, when it is boiled inough put a little butter to it, & put it all to the Capon & serve it, put the yelks of two eggs beaten, into it.

For a medium-sized bird, which will feed four people, take three quarters of a pound of spinach (well washed and picked over), a small handful of chopped parsley, a blade or two of mace, half an ounce of currants and another of stoned raisins. Boil all together, using only as much water as clings to the leaves of the spinach. As soon as the spinach is tender, remove the mace, add half a pint of sack (or sherry well diluted with water) and whizz the mixture in a liquidiser or put it through a mouli-légumes. Now add three finely chopped dates, four prunes (previously soaked and chopped), and a spoonful of beef marrow if you can get it. Heat the sauce again, and season with salt, freshly ground black pepper, a pinch of powdered ginger and a scant teaspoonful of sugar (vary all these quantities to suit your taste). Beat up the yolks of two eggs and stir in the spinach mixture, little by little for fear of curdling. Warm the sauce very gently, stirring all the time until it thickens. Put in a nut of butter and serve it with the roast chicken and a dish of buttered rice.

My next recipe comes from the same book but has been added at the back, in an inferior ink and a different handwriting, per-

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haps as late as the 18th century. It is one of those delicate old English puddings, like Stone Cream and Solid Sillabubs, which never should have been forgotten. Elizabeth David gives a somewhat similar recipe for cinnamon ice cream from Cassell's late 19th-century *Dictionary of Cookery*, but I think it is probably the barley which puts this suave and subtle cream in a class by itself:

To make Barley Cream

Take 2 Ounces of Pearle Barley, and boyle it in 2 or 3 waters till 'tis tender, then strain it from ye water & boyle it in a quart of Cream, then put in ye yelks of 6 Eggs & sweeten it to your Taste, & keep it stirring till tis pretty coole, & then put it in Glasses. You may boyle in ye Cream a little Cinnamon or Mace.

Make this exactly as you would a custard for ice cream, adding one ounce of cooked barley (changing the water in which you boil it helps to wash away the starch) to a pint of warmed cream, stirring the mixture carefully into two beaten egg yolks (17th-century hens laid small eggs, so two yolks are generally enough), and thickening it slowly in a heavy pan over a gentle heat until it will coat the back of a wooden spoon. Add about a tablespoonful of sugar and half a teaspoonful of powdered cinnamon. When the cream is cold, pour it into individual round wine glasses or bowls and chill thoroughly in the refrigerator. The directions in Lady Fettiplace's book make enough for between eight and twelve people, so I have given half quantities.

Among the many useful tips she also gives, for curing anything from bubonic plague to bloodshot eyes, here is one for backache which tender-heartedness prevents me trying: 'Boile Cats taile in milk with some mace and sugar, & drink it in the morning fasting, & at night when you go to bed.'

Weekend Competition

No 2454 Set by Robin Chase

We are getting so many unsavoury views of the famous that one wonders how long it will be before the family pets and household vermin of the great start chipping in with their memoirs. Competitors are asked for 150-word extracts from the autobiographies of Downing Street cockroaches, White House puppy-dogs, etc, in the style of Beatrix Potter, Richard Adams – and so on. By 25 March.

No 2451 Set by Maud Gracechurch

Competitors were asked for jovial ballads about the 'glamorous' baddies of the present day.

Report by Spiro Keats

Idi Amin, that most congenial of mass-murderers, scooped the pool this week, smartly followed by Maid Marcia, who has indeed conclusively captured the national imagination. I was *quite* pleased with the entry; and yet I felt that perhaps there was some subtle blend (appropriate to the ballad) of coltishness and atrocity which even our most gifted competitors failed to locate. But get along with you – £6 each for a highly enjoyable effort.

Old Idi was a democrat: when it came to
dealing death,
He didn't heed the *rank* of those whom he
bereaved of breath.
Be it Bishop, Judge or villager, whether bottom
man or Top –
It made no odds to Idi – he gave them *all*
the chop.
And when they gently chided him, there came
this plaintive cry:
'It wasn't I wot did dat ting – it was some
udder guy.'

Old Idi was an innocent: whatever tale he told,
He thought the world would credit it – though
he lied a thousandfold
So lots of folk had 'accidents' – it was easy
to explain;
While others went and shot themselves – with
ten bullets in the brain,
And when they softly scolded him, Old Idi
made reply:
'It wasn't me wot done dat ting – it was dat
udder guy.'

SIMON LITTIMER

In a swirling sea of tape he flailed
And his staff all stood around;
He swayed, he wailed, he prayed, he railed
He fell down in a swound.

'Cut there, you bastards!' Nixon cried,
His speech with liquor thick.
'The buck stops here,' his aides replied –
'Oh, fuck the buck!' cried Dick.

They have gotten him a pardon
And a wheelchair for his ass;
But nevermore shall Richard rule,
No more the buck he'll pass.

TOM DONNELLY

Then loudly cried Fair Marcia,
And chid her chivalrie:
'Your names I entered on my lists:
Enter the lists for me!'

'Haines is the caitiff traitor's name,
And heinous his offence;
And I expect all new-dubbed knights
To speak in my defence.'

But they replied, 'We cannot speak,
Though we should like to do:
For, when it comes to clearing names,
We have our problems too.'

PETER PETERSON

George Beste he was a good felawe,
A cherlyssh, lusty wight,
With maydens alwey in his bed,
To bryngen hym delit.

Wel loved he wyn and bittre ale,
A ronnen doun his berd,
And eek he wolde pley footeball,
Subtilly, have I herd.

He daunced at feestes al a night,
Swich plesaunce wolde not stoppe;
In sorwe, Fulham sayd fere-wel –
And wonne the FA Coppe.

TIM HOPKINS

Tony Miles

Chess

No 24 A Change from the Ruy Lopez

The recent Clare-Benedict tournament – the unofficial team championship of Western Europe – resulted in a victory for the host nation Denmark who scored 23½ points from their seven 4-board matches. England, the holders, finished a disappointing second, 1½ points behind. The Danish team was led by Bent Larsen, making a rare appearance for his national side and contained two IMs. Larsen's appearance was all the more surprising since the tournament finished only a few days before the start of his match against Portisch. Possibly he felt like a bit of last minute training—if so this seems to have been unsuccessful since he lost the first game of the match.

The English team also contained one GM and two IMs, the individual scores being Keene 3/6, Hartston 5/7, Stean 4½/6, Webb 1/4 and Rumens 3½/5. Hartston and Stean won prizes for the best scores on boards 2 and 3 respectively.

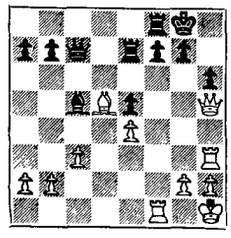
I take this week's game from a recent book 'Play the Evan's Gambit' by Bernard Cafferty and Tim Harding, published by Hale. It is a remarkably thoroughly researched work and would prove an admirable manual for any player who prefers to know his openings well, but likes lively tactical play or simply wants a change from the Ruy Lopez. The game itself was played by telegraph in 1890-91 and did much to popularise the opening at the end of the last century.

White: M. Chigorin. Black: W. Steinitz.

1. P-K4, P-K4; 2. N-KB3, N-QB3; 3. B-B4, B-B4; 4. P-QN4!? B x P; 5. P-B3, B-R4; 6. 0-0. 6. PQ4 is now considered the accurate move order. **6 . . . Q-B3; 7. P-Q4, N-R3; 8. B-KN5.** A slightly more recent game, Timman-Kurajica Wijk-aan-Zee '77 (1977 that is), went 8. P-Q5, N-K2; 9. Q-R4 (Cafferty and Harding consider 9. B-KN5 to favour white) B-N3; 10. N-R3, N-N5; 11. P-KR3, P-KR4; 12. R-N1, P-QR3; 13. R x BI? P x R; 14. R-Q1, R-QN1; 15. Q-N4, Q-N3; 16. B-N3, P-N4; 17. P-B4, P-Q3; 18. P x P, P-R4; 19. Q x RP, P-N3; 20. Q-B3, N-KB3 and black untangled maintaining his extra material. **8 . . . Q-Q3.** If 8 . . . Q-N3; 9. P-Q5 and 10. B x N, 11. N x P. **9. P-Q5, N-Q1; 10. Q-R4, B-N3; 11. N-R3, P-QB3; 12. B-K2, B-B2; 13. N-B4, Q-B1; 14. P-Q6! B x P; 15. N-N6, R-QN1; 16. Q x RP, N-K3; 17. B-B1, N-N1.** This seems to be overdoing the 'undevelopment'. 17 . . . B-B2 should be tried, but 18. B-R3 is still strong. **18. B-R3, P-QB4; 19. QR-Q1, N-B3; 20. B-B4, B-B2; 21. N-Q5.** Black's extra pawn is meaningless and the weak squares on the Q and QN files are fatal. **21 . . . B-Q3; 22. N-R4, N x N; 23. N-B5! P-KN3; 24. N x Bch; Q x N; 25. B x N, Q-B2; 26. B x N, BP x B; 27. B x P, R-R1; 28. Q x R, Q x B; 29. Q-R4, K-Q1; 30. R-Q2, K-B2; 31. R-N1, R-Q1, 32. R-N5, Q-B3; 33. Q-N4, P-Q3; 34. P-QR4, Q-K1; 35. R-N6, Q-B1; 36. Q-R5, P-Q4; 37. P x P, K-N1; 38. P-Q6 Resigns.**

Problem 24:

White to play. How should the game go? Entries to me at the NEW STATESMAN postmarked not later than Wednesday 23 March.



Solution to Problem 22: 1. Q x Pch, K-B1; 2. Q x R (B7)! R-R5; 3. Q-Q8ch! K-N2; 4. R x Pch! P x R; 5. Q-K7ch, K-N1; 6. Q-K8ch, K-N2; 7. P-R6ch! K-B3; 8. Q x R! Q x Q; 9. P-R7 and white wins.

The symbol of the black queen above has been reprinted by permission of J. M. Dent & Sons from their book A Picture Guide to Chess *by Paul Langfield.*

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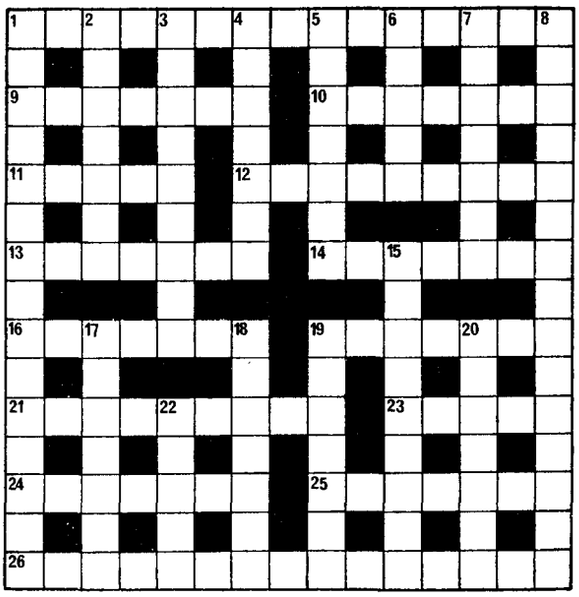
Weekend Crossword 1206

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1206, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 22 March.



ACROSS

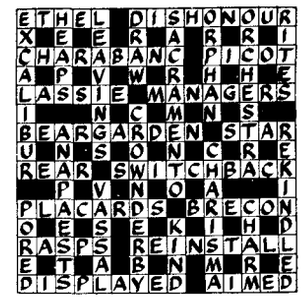
1. Heard the last of a thousand changes, but he never seems to hurry (3, 6, 6).
9. Takes possession of a girl with the reverse of what is attractive (7).
10. No drama broadcast in the garden (7).
11. Land in a shingle beach (5).
12. One who makes a mess of realities (9).
13. Being scared of the supreme comic (7).
14. Shell which gives a second to catch just about everything (7).
16. Joins up when less tin is used (7).
19. The avaricious one is a serpent at heart (7).
21. Smoother for a novelist and what she wrote on (9).
23. Vision of sappers during engineering work (5).
24. State of a priest without a degree (7).
25. Lamp which may be magic (7).
26. Make Dad recite lesson as political statement (8, 7).

DOWN

1. Part of Africa in a fruitless condition (6, 4, 5).
2. Confined space in which a heavyweight holds George (7).
3. Worries of a team with only one point before the cup matches (9).
4. The endless resort for speeding (7).
5. Words about currency (7).
6. Joint used in stretching exercises (5).
7. Warlike poet (7).
8. Royal accommodation is kept separate in announcements (5, 10).
15. Performed in a group without regard for decency (9).
17. The ancestors appear in a row on time (7).
18. Thus a piano artist and no singer (7).
19. If the animal lost its tail it would have to leave with the stream (7).
20. Go before to make the people's leader go back (7).
22. Queue for a penny drink in France (5).

SETSQUARE

Solution to No 1204



Prizewinners to No 1204

Mrs R. Ostime
(Botolph Claydon)
A. J. Petrie (Exeter)
Mrs A. D. Gill (Warlingham)

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NEW STATESMAN

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Theatres

HAMPSTEAD THEATRE. 722 9301. 'The Last Meeting of the Knights of the White Magnolia'. Evgs. 8 p.m. Sats 5 & 8 p.m.

IPSWICH THEATRE (Box Office 53725) 2-26 March 'The Merchant of Venice' by William Shakespeare.

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Meetings

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UNIVERSITY OF LONDON: A lecture entitled: 'Die Romantische Lyrik und Ihre Nachwirkungen Im 20. Jahrhundert' will be given by Professor Eberhard Lämmert (President, Freien University, Berlin) at University College London, Botany Theatre, Gower Street, WC1 at 5.30 p.m. on 15 March 1977. Admission free, without ticket. Academic Registrar.

NATHALIE SARRAUTE, author, will give a lecture 'Le Silence!: lecture commentée' on Thursday 17 March at 6.15 p.m. at the French Institute, Queensberry Place, SW7. Tel: 589 6211 ext. 38. Admission free.

ST GEORGE'S DAY. 3 p.m.-8 p.m. Trafalgar Sq. Required: bands, dancers, joggers, Elizabeths. Details ring Frank Hansford-Miller 01-852 0627.

'TOWARDS A NEW INTERNATIONAL Economic Order' Anila Graham, formerly UNCTAD Secretariat. 16 March, 7.30 p.m. Physics Theatre, Univ. Coll., Gower Place, WC1. Prof. Pentz, (O.U.) chairs this Bernal Peace Library Lecture.

SUNDAY 13 MARCH: Young Mapam. Ken Livingstone, Lab. Parliamentary candidate for Hampstead on 'The Current Middle East Situation'. 8 p.m. 37 Broadhurst Gdns, NW6

'THE FUTURE OF MENTAL HEALTH within the NHS': Hear Roland Moyle MP, Minister of State DHSS; Prof. Peter Clare, Chairman National Development Group; Dr Anthony Clare, Institute of Psychiatry. Entrance free, all welcome. House of Commons, 6.45 p.m. Wednesday 23 March. Organised by Labour Campaign for Mental Health.

YOUNG FABIAN GROUP, 11 Dartmouth St, SW1. Joan Lestor MP, speaking Tues. 15 March 7.30-8 p.m. All welcome.

YOGA: Talks with meditation session on Thursdays 10, 17, 24 March at 7 p.m. at YWCA, 16 Great Russell St, WC1. Further details from Shanti Sadan, Centre of Adhyatma Yoga, 29 Chepstow Villas, W11.

RAMAKRISHNA VEDANTA CENTRE, 54 Holland Pk, W11. Sun. 13 March 'Freedom and Bondage' by Swami Bhavyananda at 5 p.m. All welc. Vedanta mag. 40p.

BUDDHIST SOCIETY, 58 Eccleston Square, London SW1. Sat. 13 March 3 p.m. 'Open Day'. Tues. 15 March 6.30 p.m. 'Introducing Buddhism'. Wed. 16 March 6.30 p.m. Public Lecture 'How Buddhism can help you' – Paul Ingram. All welcome. Send s.a.e. for full programme.

THEOSOPHY. Informal Forum on Basic Theosophy. Sun. 13 March 8 p.m. S.a.e. for free pamphlet, book list, programme of talks, ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2

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